

WINDSOR MAGAZINE

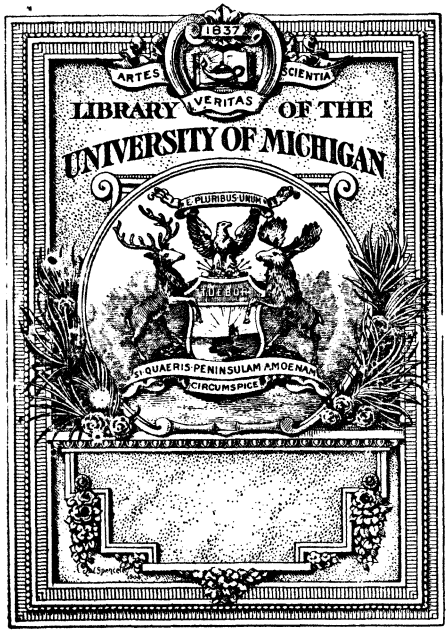
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THE

WINDSOR MAGAZINE

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY

FOR

MEN AND WOMEN

VOL. XXXIII

DECEMBER 1910 TO MAY 1911

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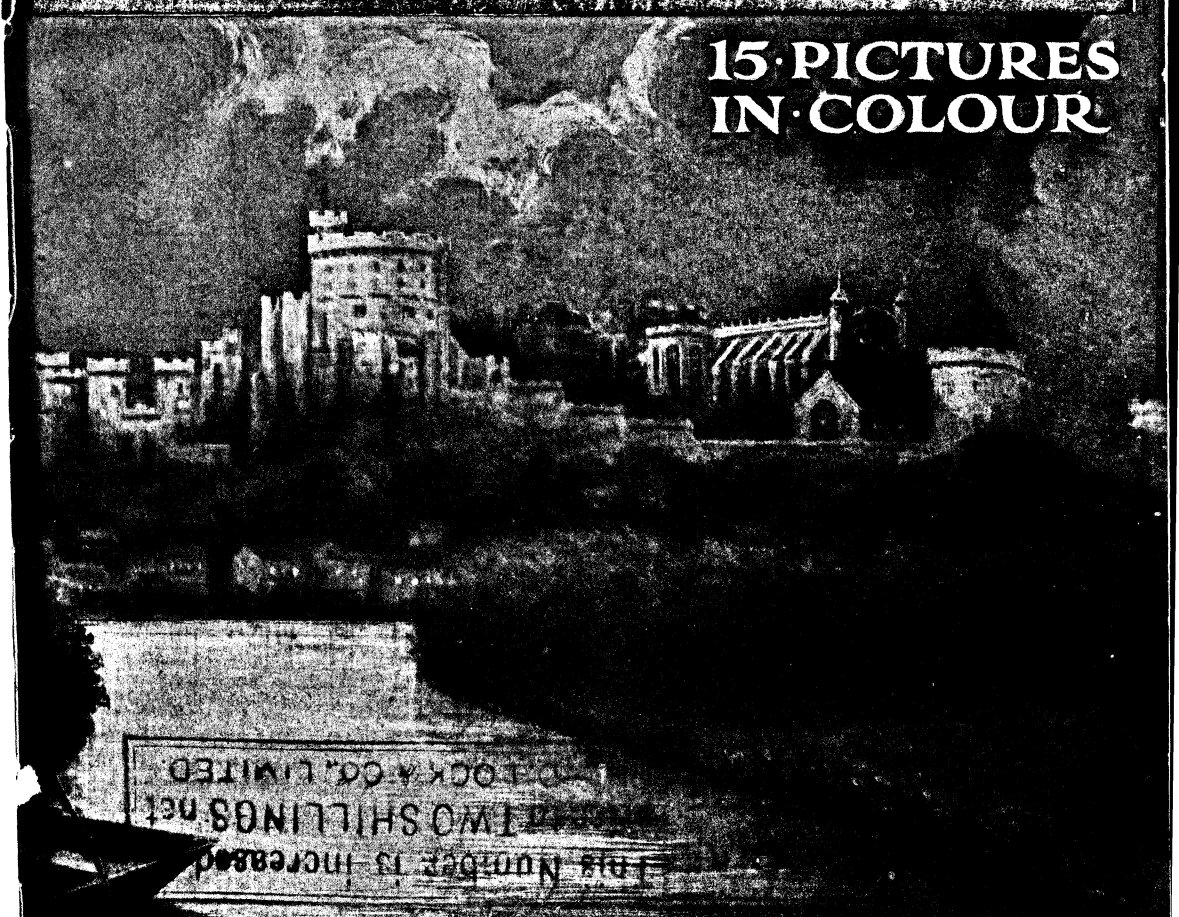
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"GOD REST YE, MERRIE GENTLEMEN!" BY SEYMOUR LUCAS, R.A.

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"THE AWAKENING." BY SOLOMON J. SOLOMON, R.A.

THE CITY ART GALLERY, LEEDS.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

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"BEAUTY makes for simplicity, and simplicity makes for frugality and for health." To be assured of the truth of this saying, we have but to look back to the great Periclean and golden age. It was thanks to their wonderful system of education, to their cultivation of taste, and the training of it round actual standards of beauty, to their perfect physical development by means of gymnastic exercises, to their wearing a dress which allowed of freedom and grace in movement, that the Greeks, some 500 or 600 years B.C., attained to a perfection of art and of beauty that no country has since equalled. The æsthetic sense was then amongst them so strongly developed that they were able to produce masterpieces of art, and these masterpieces, amongst which they lived—even the masons of Greece were artists—helped, in their turn, to create a people godlike in their beauty. Beauty, indeed, in those days, was looked upon as a direct gift from Heaven, and, after death, those who in life had possessed it were accorded heroic honours. Simonides of Samos, who lived more than 600 years B.C., made beauty the second of the four conditions necessary to happiness.

Of the decay of this standard we know, but there are signs of the modern world seeking to make a place for beauty in its

affections. This cannot be done at once, for, as Sir Joshua Reynolds wrote :—

"Whoever would reform a nation, supposing a bad taste to prevail in it, will not accomplish his purpose by going directly against the stream of its people's prejudices. Men's minds must be prepared to receive what is new to them. Reformation is a work of time. A national taste, however wrong it may be, cannot be totally changed at once. We must yield a little to the prepossession which has taken hold on the mind, and we may then bring people to adopt what

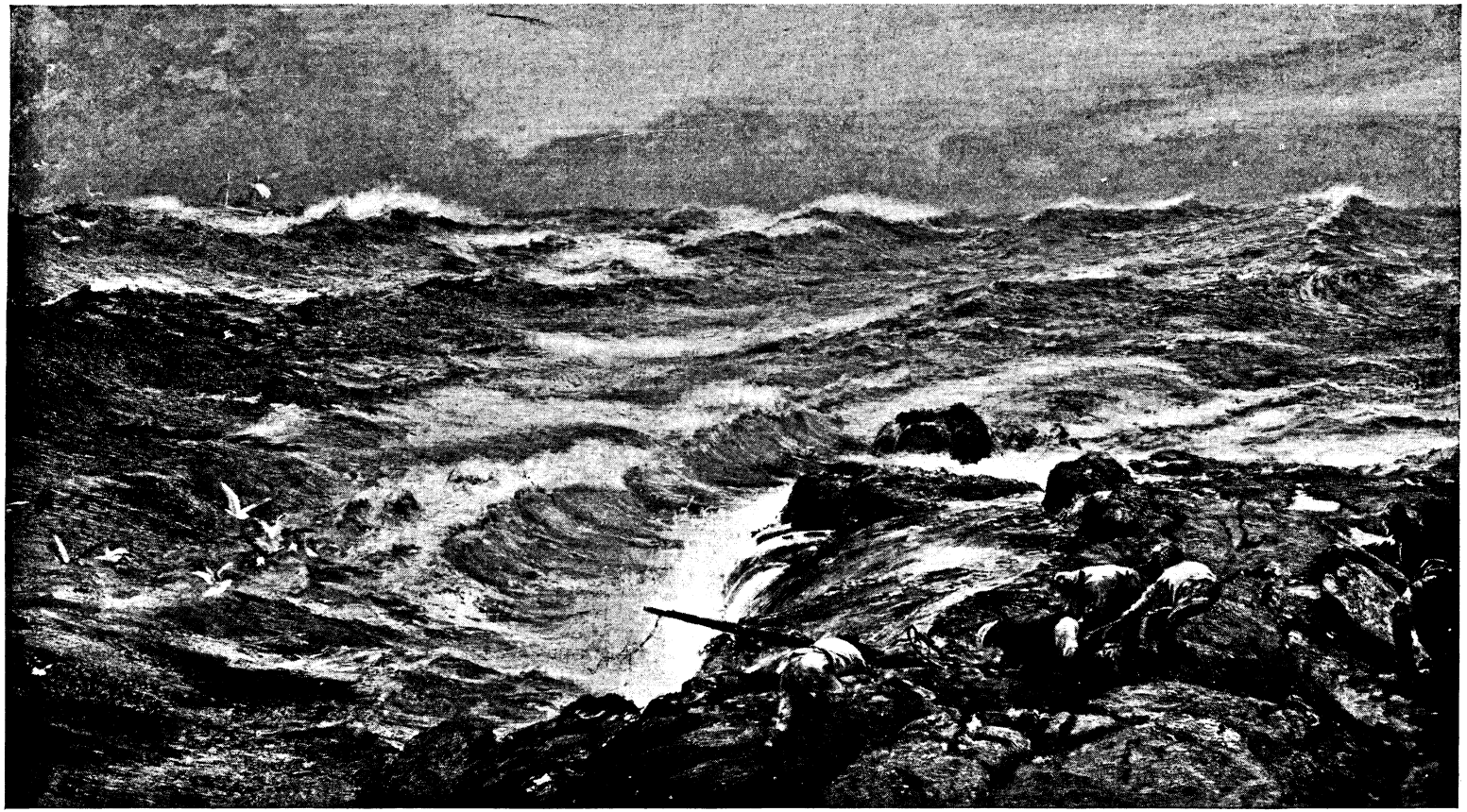


"THE NEAREST WAY." BY J. W. OAKES, A.R.A.

would offend them if endeavoured to be introduced to them by violence."

To-day we are endeavouring to prepare our minds "to receive what is new to them," endeavouring to embark upon an education which will become complete only when our sensibility to beautiful impressions has very materially increased ; yet already we are beginning to realise that life is but an imperfect thing without its highest ornament —Art.

Time was, and not so very long ago, when none but the travelled few had means of making themselves acquainted with works of art. They went to Athens to see its mutilated architectural remains, to wonder at the Parthenon, the Temple of the Olympian Jove, and the Erectheum. They went to the churches of Italy, of Holland, and of Spain ; visited, perhaps, Florence, to marvel at, if not to recognise, what magic of the Renaissance lies in Botticelli's "Primavera," Fra Angelico's "Last Judgment," and Michael Angelo's "David." In pursuit of art education, they would go to Brussels, or more particularly to Antwerp, to study the primitive Matsys, Memlines, and Van Eycks, the works of the later Rubens and Van Dyck ; to the Hague for sight of the art of Franz Hals, to Madrid for that of Velasquez, to Seville for that of Murillo, to Ravenna to see that of the Italo-Byzantine School, and to the Hermitage at St. Petersburg to familiarise themselves with the best work of Raphael and the later Flemish and Dutch Schools generally. On their way home they might visit Valenciennes for the purpose of seeing the masterpieces of Watteau ; and although Pater's description of "La Gioconda" was not then written, they too, as they walked through the galleries of the Louvre, would note in this, Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece, how "she is older than the rocks



"BIRDS OF PREY." BY C. NAPIER HEMY, A.R.A.

among which she sits. Like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave."

But in England, until the opening of the National Gallery in 1838, our stay-at-home countrymen had no opportunity of such development as study of works of art of a high order affords, for what treasures there were in our own country were in private houses—in those of people such as the Duke of Westminster, the Duke of Sutherland, the Marquis of Exeter, and the Earl of Ellesmere. Since the establishment of the National Gallery, however, many private collections, by purchase or by bequest, have become the property of the nation. In one or other of these ways, the Peel, the Vernon, the Turner, and the Wynn-Ellis collections were acquired, and now the pictures in our National Gallery are almost unrivalled.

The National Portrait Gallery was founded in 1856, then came the National Gallery of British Art—originally known as the Tate Gallery—and the municipal galleries of the principal provincial cities. Liverpool is notable for treasures of the early Flemish, and Glasgow for those of the Venetian School, and amongst these galleries of art we include that of the City of Leeds, which, like those of Birmingham and of Manchester, is peculiarly rich in examples of the work of modern men.

In or about 1858, several pictures, including a Gainsborough, a Raeburn, a John Russell, a Pannini, and a Borgognone, were presented to the City of Leeds with a view to forming the nucleus of a permanent collection, and for a time were hung in the Town Hall with Schwanfelder's "Portrait of Himself," a gift by Mr. James Anderson, Postmaster of Leeds in 1859, and with "Mary Queen of Scots when an Infant, shown to the English Ambassador by her Mother, Mary of Guise," by B. R. Haydon, the gift of Sir Andrew Fairbairn, Mayor in 1867. Then, under the instigation and advocacy of Alderman Colonel T. Walter Harding, D.L., J.P., the building of the City Art Gallery, from designs of Mr. W. H. Thorp,



"THE TEMPTATION OF SIR PERCIVALE." BY ARTHUR HACKER, A.R.A.



"THE RETURN OF PERSEPHONE."

By Lord Leighton, P.R.A.

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"SONS OF THE BRAVE." BY PHIL R. MORRIS, A.R.A.

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the principal local architect, was commenced, and from the penny rate, hitherto applied exclusively to the purposes of the Public Library, an income of eight hundred pounds a year was assured to the institution, the Council of the City of Leeds later relieving the Committee of Management of all expenses of the gallery's erection. On so slender an income the actual purchases could not be expected to be great; but with the opening of the new Art Gallery in 1888, magnificent donations flowed in. "Scotland for Ever!" by Lady Butler; "Cordelia Comforting her Father, King Lear, in Prison," by G. W. Joy; and "A Dream of Ancient Athens," by Sidney Herbert, were presented to the gallery by the man who had done so much to help forward its erection—Colonel T. Walter Harding. That same year of the gallery's opening—1888—the late Mr. T. R. Harding, J.P., gave three pictures: "Cattle in the Meadow," by Sidney Cooper, R.A.; "Noah's Sacrifice," by Daniel Maclise, R.A.; and "A Turkish Warship on Fire," by C. Bollanachi; while Mr. E. Simpson, Sir John Barran, Bart., M.P., and Sir Hubert Herkomer, R.A., who attended the gallery's opening, gave severally "The Convent Garden," by F. S. Walker; "Sunrise in the Alps," by Gustave Doré; and "The Road Mender," painted by the last-named donor himself.



"THE LADY OF SHALOTT." BY J. W. WATERHOUSE, R.A.

In 1891, the generous bequest of Mr. C. T. Lockwood enriched the gallery by a Morland, a Müller, a Herdman, a Williams (Old Williams), a Rathbone, a C. J. Vernet, a Verboom, a Van Ostade, a De Vois, a Breydel, and a large number of works, chiefly in water-colour, by John and Joseph Rhodes, father and son, Leeds painters of considerable repute. A year later, five hundred pounds increase of income accrued to the institution by grants from the Board of Technical Education and the Council. Thus the annual money for expenditure now available is fifteen hundred pounds.

In this way there came into existence a



"A LIFE OF SHADOWS." BY W. GILBERT FOSTER.



"BACK TO LIFE." BY SIR HUBERT VON HERKOMER, R.A.

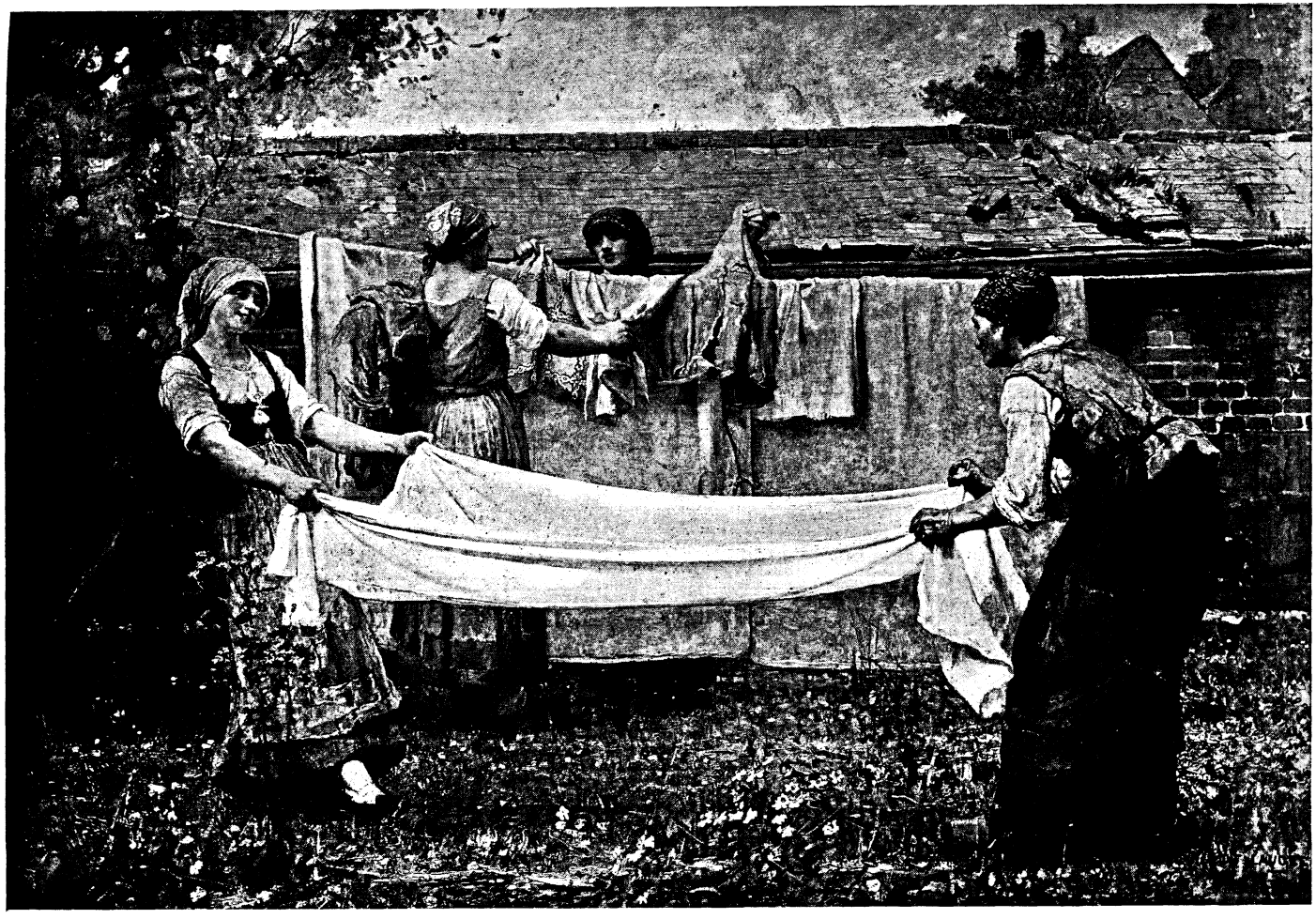
gallery through the doors of which there pass, on an average, one thousand people a day, and of which the value of its contents is estimated at some forty thousand pounds.

acute enough to recognise the higher and more consistent harmony which is to be found in the best work, they yet have their curiosity awakened as to the subject-meaning



"HIS DAUGHTER'S BAIRN." BY ARTHUR HACKER, A.R.A.

Human nature halts between the wish to know and the trouble entailed in learning; but even if those who frequent public galleries have not sensibility of judgment of the canvases upon which they look. Thus they are often led unconsciously to seek to educate themselves by being brought, when looking at some such picture as Lord



"WASHING DAY." BY D. F. LAUGEE.

Leighton's "The Return of Persephone," to consider the myth created by the imagination of a marvellous people.

Lord Leighton, if not a Leeds, was a Yorkshire man; but more strictly a local one of the city's glories; in London, which is the headquarters of English art, he is less known, and his place in the hierarchy of paint has yet to be decided.

Mr. Solomon J. Solomon, who has also



"TOIL." BY MARK SENIOR.

man was Mr. Atkinson Grimshaw, who, born in 1836, was strongly influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite movement. His "Iris" is another picture which owes its inspiration to the dignity of an undying tradition. In Leeds, Mr. Atkinson Grimshaw is held as often sought his subjects from amongst early myths, is represented here by a picture called "The Awakening," which shows some young Icarus, maybe, accustoming himself to the use of wings. Another notable picture from classical myth is "The



"A VILLAGE FUNERAL." BY FRANK HOLL, R.A.

Mermaids' Rock" of Mr. E. Matthew Hale. Mr. J. W. Waterhouse, in his "The Lady of Shalott," has here turned for inspiration to that old French legend of Malory's "Morte d'Arthur," which Tennyson's poetic imagination clothed with such vivid and enchanting imagery, since he made the story illustrate by parable the human soul's attempt to escape its responsibilities. The Lady of Shalott was to weave her task recording things seen but in a glass as she sat alone in an isolated chamber.

She became envious of a life she could not share; she cried, as has done many another, "I am half sick of shadows!" and she, too, succumbing to temptation, forfeited peace by act of disobedience.

> Out flew the web and floated wide,
> The mirror cracked from side to side;
> "The curse is come upon me!" cried
> The Lady of Shalott.

In "The Temptation of Sir Percivale," by Arthur Hacker, A.R.A., we again find Malory's "Morte d'Arthur" as source of a painter's conception, the artist having taken the moment when one of the Knights of the Round Table of King Arthur, encountering the arch-fiend in woman's form, is saved from demoniac wiles by a vision of the red cross on the pommel of his sword.

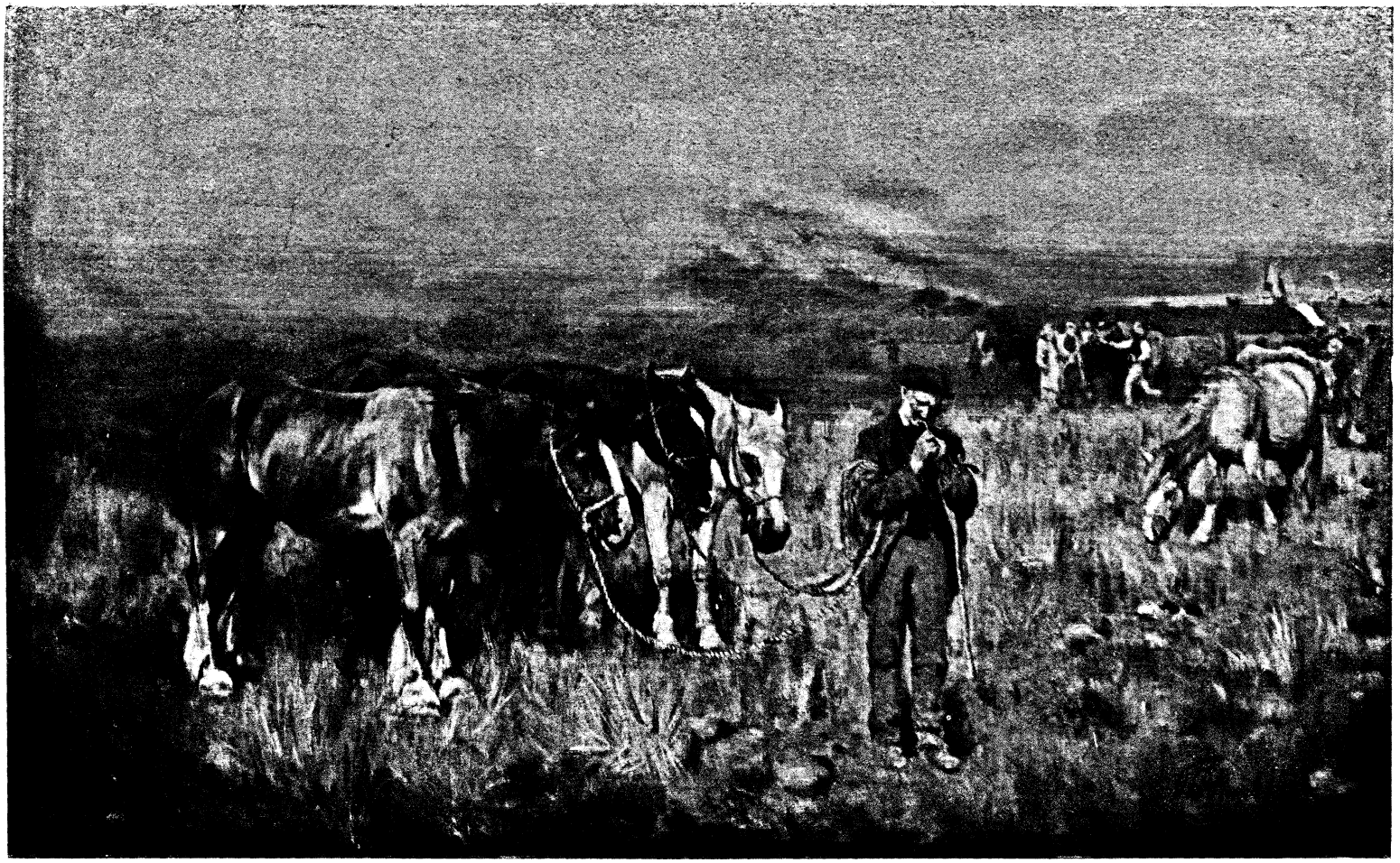
Landscape art is well represented. There is "The Golden Valley" of Sir Alfred East; "A Snowstorm," by Edward Stott; "The Harbour Bar," by Adrian Stokes; "Waiting for Buyers," by Thomas Hunt; T. Millie Dow's "A Village in the Apennines," David Murray's stretch of lowland, "Driving the Cows, Hampshire," Joseph Farquharson's "Yon Yellow Sunset Dying in the West," Keeley Halswelle's "The Mouth of Greta, Yorkshire," J. W. Inchbold's "On the



"LANDSCAPE, WITH SHEEP AND GOATS." BY T. SIDNEY COOPER, R.A.

Lagoon, Venice," which was one of the first purchases made for the gallery; Rex Vicat Cole's "A Winding of the Wharfe," G. C. Haitë's "Sunlight on the Hill," and "An Old Barn"; two pictures by A. Friedenson—"The Flowing Tide" and "October Sunshine"—an artist who found his first inspirations in the City of Leeds, of which he is a native; and two moonlight scenes by Atkinson Grimshaw, who was the pioneer in those effects of moonlight in which he has had many followers.

There is a portrait by an unknown painter of Leeds' great benefactor, John Harrison, alderman and merchant of Leeds in the



"WAITING FOR BUYERS." BY THOMAS HUNT, R.S.W.

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"THE MERMAIDS' ROCK." BY E. MATTHEW HALE.

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time of Charles the First. He built and endowed the Church of St. John the Evangelist, 1633–34, founded the adjoining almshouses, called by his name, greatly enriched the Grammar School, and erected a market cross.

In considering a collection of pictures which numbers two hundred and fifty, we are unable, from lack of space, to touch upon more than a few, and must therefore in this short article leave unrecorded the names of many men all of whom have had something to say, and a very considerable knowledge of how to say it.

interesting descriptive catalogue issued by the gallery authorities, which has been skilfully compiled by the curator, Mr. George Birkett, with admirable expository notes about the various pictures, and concise biographical information as to their respective artists and the various sections or groups of art to which they belong. The volume is one of considerable interest for all who are interested in modern art, whether they are likely to visit the gallery itself or not.

Our selection of reproductions from the pictures of this gallery has been necessarily controlled at some points by the question of



"THE SEAL DIVER." BY W. H. BARTLETT, R.I.

We have said enough, we think, to show that Leeds may well be proud of its picture gallery, and that those in search of beauty can here break through those limits which are too often imposed on the vision of the average, or inartistic, intelligence.

Within the scope of one article we have not space to give more than a general idea of the remarkable variety of such a collection as is now contained in the Leeds Gallery; but we have, perhaps, given some idea of the artistic and educational value of such a permanent exhibition, and to those who would explore it further we can recommend, in conclusion, the

availability of photographs from which to reproduce, but we hope to be able to present a second selection from the gallery's treasures before long. Our coloured plates have been made from new negatives by the most complete modern method for obtaining exact facsimile copies of the original colours. Four of these are included in this article, and two others—representing the fine work of Mr. J. Aumonier, R.I., and Mr. Mark Fisher, R.I.—are found later in the present number in connection with an article on "The Shepherd's Year," which is also accompanied by other reproductions in black and white.

THE MARRIAGE OF HERMES.

By MAURICE HEWLETT.



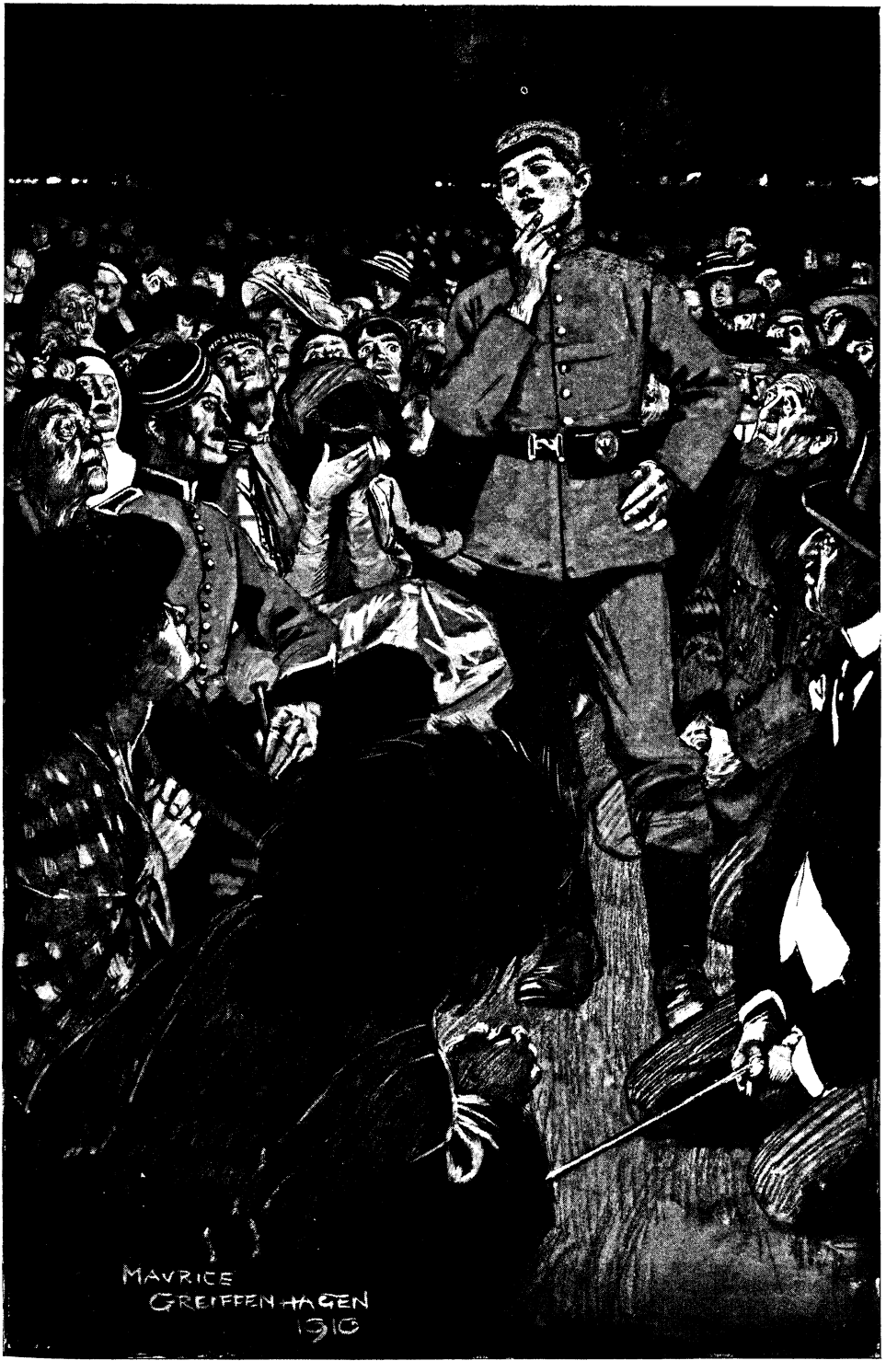
EFORE I present to the curious reader the facts of a case which caused so much commotion in distinguished bosoms of the late 'eighties, I think it well to give a little private testimony of my own. It is proper also that I should say that, while I have a strong conviction as to the identity of the person known to all London as Quidnunc, I shall do no more than express it. I shall neither defend nor extenuate. If I throw it out at all, it will be as a hint to the judicious, or a clue, if you like, to those who are groping a way out of the labyrinths of being. To me two things are especially absurd—one is that the trousered, or skirted, forms we eat with, walk with, or pass unheeded, are all the population of our world; the other, that these creatures, ostensibly men or women with passions, hopes, fears, appetites like our own, are necessarily of the same nature as ourselves. If beings from another sphere should, by intention or chance, meet and mingle with us, I don't see how we could apprehend them at all except in our own mode, unless they were, so to speak, translated into our idioms. But enough of that. The year in which I first met Quidnunc, so far as my memory serves me, was 18⁸6.

I was then a student of the law, with chambers in Gray's Inn, which I daily attended; but being more interested in palæography than in modern practice, and intending to make that my particular branch of effort, I spent much of my time at the Public Record Office—indeed, a portion of every working day. The track between Raymond Buildings and Rolls Yard must have been sensibly thinned by my foot-soles; there can have been few of the frequenters of Chancery Lane, Bedford Row, and the squares of Gray's Inn who were not known to me by sight, or concerning whom I had not imagined—or discerned—circumstances invisible to their friends or themselves to account for their acts or appearances. Among these innumerable personages—portly solicitors, dashing clerks, scriveners, racing tipsters, match-sellers, postmen, young ladies of business, young ladies of pleasure, clients descending out of broughams, clients keeping rendezvous in public-houses, and what not—Quidnunc's may well have been one; but I believe that it was in Warwick Court—that passage from Holborn into the Inn—that, quite suddenly, I first saw him, or became aware that I saw him; for being, as he was, to all appearance, an ordinary telegraphic messenger, I may have passed him daily for a year without any kind of notice. But on a day in the early spring of 1886—mid-April at a guess—I came upon him in such a way as to remark him incurably. I saw before me on that morning of tender leafage, of pale sunlight and blue mist contending for the day, a strangely assorted pair proceeding slowly towards the Inn. A telegraph boy was one; by his side walked, vehemently explaining, a tall elderly solicitor—white-whiskered, drab-spatted, frock-coated, eye-glassed, silk-hatted—in every detail the trusted family lawyer. I knew the man by sight, and knew him by name and repute. He was George Lumley Fowkes, of Fowkes, Vizard and Fowkes, respectable head of a more than respectable firm; and here he was, with his hat pushed back from his dewy forehead, tiptoeing, protesting, extenuating to a slip of a lad in uniform. The positions of the odd pair were unaccountably reversed: Jack was better than his master, the deference was from the elder to the brat. The stoop of Fowkes's shoulder, the anxious angle of his head, his care to listen to the little he got—and how little that was I could not but observe—his frequent ejaculations of "Bless my soul!" his deep concern, and the boy's unconcern, curtly expressed, if expressed at all—all this was singular. So much more than singular was it to myself that it enthralled me.

They stopped in the gateway which leads you to Bedford Row to finish their colloquy.

The halt was made by Fowkes, barely acquiesced in by his companion. Poor old Fowkes, what with his asthma, the mopping

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"He stood here like some young Eastern king."

of his head, the flacking of his long fingers, exhibited signals of the highest distress. "I need hardly assure you, sir——" I heard; and then "Believe me, sir, when I say——" He was marking time, unhappy gentleman, for with such phrases does the orator eke out his waning substance. The lad listened in a critical, staring mood, and once or twice nodded. While I was wondering how long he was going to put up with it, presently he jerked his head back and showed Fowkes, by the look he gave him, that he had had enough of him. The old lawyer knew it for final, for he straightened his back, then his hat, touched the brim and made a formal bow. "I leave it so, sir," he said; "I am content to leave it so." And then, with every mark of respect, he went his way into Bedford Row. I noticed that he walked on tiptoe for some yards, and then more briskly, flapping his arms to his sides.

The boy stood thoughtful where he was, communing, by the looks of him, quite otherwhere, and I had the opportunity to consider him. He appeared to be a handsome, well-built lad of fifteen or so, big for his age, and precocious. By that I mean that his scrutiny of life was mature, that he looked capable far beyond the warrant of his years. To have judged him by his looks would have put him at any age you please. He was ruddy of complexion, freckled, and had a square chin. His eyes were light grey, with dark lashes to them; they were startlingly light and bright for such a sunburnt face—seemed to burn in it like steady fires. It was in them that resided, that sat, as it were, enthroned, that mature, masterful expression which I never saw before or since in one so young. I have seen the eyes of children look as if they were gazing through our world into another; that's almost habitual in children. But here was one, apparently a boy, who seemed to read into our circumstances—as you or I into a well-studied book—as though they held nothing inexplicable, nothing unaccounted for. Beyond these singular two eyes of his, his smiling mouth, with its reminder of archaic statuary, was perhaps his only noticeable feature. He wore the ordinary uniform of a telegraphic messenger, which in those days was grey, with a red line down the trousers, and a belt for the tunic. His boots were of the Service pattern, so were his gaiters. His hands were no cleaner than they ought to have been, his nails well-bitten back. Such was he.

Studying him closely over the top of my newspaper, by and by he fixed me with his intent, bright eyes. My heart beat quicker, but when he smiled—like the Pallas of Ægina—I smiled too. Then, without varying his expression, speaking as if to himself, he said, "Back Markover," and vanished.

There's no other word for it—he vanished. I didn't see him go; I don't know whether he went or where he went. At one moment he was there, speaking to me, telling me to back a racehorse; at the next moment he was not there. That's all there is to say about it. I flashed a glance through the gate into Bedford Row, another up to Raymond Buildings; I even ran to the corner which showed me the length and breadth of Field Place. He was not going any of these ways. These things are certain; and so is this also, that on my journey down Chancery Lane I did back Markover for the Afternoon Stakes to the tune of a ten-pound note.

Now for the sequel. Mere fortune—or so I suppose it—led me at four that afternoon into Bedford Row. A note had been put into my hands at the Record Office inviting me to call upon a friend whose chambers were in that quarter, and I complied with it directly my work was over. Now, as I walked along the Row, thinking, like the Irishman, of "nothing at all," the boy of that morning's encounter was going into the entry of the house in which Fowkes and Vizard have their offices. I had just time to recognise him when the double-knock announced his errand. I stopped immediately. He delivered in a telegram and came out. I was on the step, and whether he knew me or not, he did not look his knowledge. His eyes went through me, his smiling mouth did not smile at me. But, passing me, he said: "Did you back Markover?" I laughed and nodded. He went his leisurely way, and I watched him, this time almost out of sight. But while I stood so watching, old Fowkes came bursting out of his office, tears streaming down his face, the telegram in his hand. "Where is he? Where is he?" This was addressed to me. I pointed the way. Old Fowkes saw his benefactor—as I suppose him to have been—and began to run. The lad turned round, saw him coming, waved him away, and then—disappeared. Again he had done it. But old Fowkes, in no way surprised, stood rooted to the pavement, with his hands extended so far towards the mystery that I could see two or three inches of bony old wrist beyond his

shirt-cuffs. After a while he turned and slowly came back to his chambers. He seemed not to see me, or he was careless whether I saw him or not. As he entered the doorway, he held up the telegram, bent his head and laid a kiss upon the pink paper.

Markover had, in fact, won the Afternoon Stakes as he liked.

Now I come to the Richborough story, which all London that is as old as I am remembers. That part of London, it may be, does not read this magazine, or, if it does, will not object to the recall of a case which absorbed it in 1886–7. I am not going to be indiscreet. The lady married, and the lady left England. Moreover, naturally, I give no names; but if I did, I don't see that there is anything to be ashamed of in what she was pleased to do with her hand and person. It was startling to us in those days; it might be startling in these. What was more than startling was the manner in which the thing was done. That is known to very few persons indeed.

I had seen enough upon that April day, whose events form my prelude, to give me remembrance of the handsome telegraph boy. The next time I saw him, which was at midnight in July—the place Hyde Park—I knew him at once.

I had been dining in Prince's Gate with a dull company—an interminable dinner, one of those at which you eat twice as much as you intend, or desire, because there is really nothing else to do. On one side of me I had had a dowager whom I entirely failed to interest, on the other a young person who only cared to talk with her left-hand neighbour. There was a reception afterwards to which I had to stop, so that I could not make my escape till half-past eleven or more. The night was very hot, and it had been raining, but such air as there was, was balm after the still furnace of the rooms. I decided immediately to walk to my lodging in Bryanston Street, entered the Park by Prince's Gate, crossed the Serpentine Bridge, and took a bee-line for the Marble Arch. It was cloudy, but not at all dark. I could see all the ankle-high railings which beset the unwary passenger, and may at any moment break his legs and his nose, imperil his dignity, and ruin his hat. Dimly ahead of me, then, upon a broad stretch of grass, I presently became aware of a concourse. There was no sound to go by, and the light afforded me no definite forms. The luminous haze was blurred. People were there—a multitude of people. I was surprised, but not alarmed. Save for an occasional wastrel of civilisation, incapable of degradation and concerned only for a meal, the Park is wont to be a desert at that hour; but the hum of the traffic, the flashing cab-lamps — never quite out of sight—prevent fear. Far from being afraid, I was highly interested, and, hastening my steps, was soon in the outskirts of a throng.

A throng it certainly was, a large body of persons, male and female, scattered yet held together by a common interest, loitering and expectant, strangely silent, not concerned with each other, rarely in couples, with all their faces turned one way—namely, to the south-east, or, if you want precision, precisely to Hyde Park Corner. I have remarked upon the silence. That was really surprising, so also was the order observed, and what you may call decorum. There was no ribaldry, no skylarking, no shrill discord of laughter without mirth in it to break the solemnity of the gracious night. These people just stood or squatted about. If any talked together, it was in secret whispers. It is true that they were under the watch of a tall policeman. Yet he, too, I noticed, watched nobody, but looked steadily to the south-east, with his lantern harmless at his belt. As my eyes grew used to the gloom, I observed that all ranks composed the company. I made out the shell jacket, the waist and elongated limbs of a Life-guardsman, the open bosom of an able seaman. I happened upon a young gentleman in the crush hat and Inverness of the current fashion; I made certain of women of all conditions and sorts, women so-called, ladies so-called, shop-girls, hoydens, better and worse. I saw, for instance, a hospital nurse, I saw a Greenwich pensioner. I saw two flower-girls sitting on the edges of one basket, a shoe-black, I think, a costermonger, and a nun. Others there were, and more than one or two of most categories—in a word, there was an assembly.

I accosted the policeman, who heard me civilly, but without committing himself. To my first question: What was going to happen? he carefully answered that he could not say; but to my second, with the irrepressible scorn of one who knows for one who wants to know, he answered more frankly: "Who are they waiting for? Why, Quidnunc—Mister Quidnunc. That's who it is. Him they call Quidnunc. So now you know." In fact, I did not know. He had told me nothing—would tell me no more. And while I stood pondering the oracle, I was sensible of some

common movement run through the company with a thrill—unite them, intensify them, draw them together to be one people with one faith, one hope, one assurance. And then the nun, who stood near me, fell to her knees, crossed herself, and began to pray; and not far off her a slim girl in black turned aside and covered her face with her hands. A perceptible shiver of emotion, a fluttering sigh such as steals over a pine-wood towards dawn, ran through all ranks. Far to the south-east a speck of light now showed, which grew in intensity as it came swiftly nearer, and seemed presently to be a ball of vivid fire surrounded by a shroud of lit vapour. Again, as by a common consent, the crowd parted, stood ranked, with an open lane between. The oncoming flare, grown intolerably bright, now seemed to fade out as it resolved itself into a human figure. A human figure at the entry of the lane of people there undoubtedly was—a figure with so much light about him, raying, I thought, from him, that it was easy to observe his form and features. Out of the flame and radiant mist he grew, and showed himself to me in the trim shape and semblance, with the small head and alert air, of a youth. And such as he was, in the belted tunic and peaked cap of a telegraph messenger, he came smoothly down the lane formed by the obsequious throng, and stood in the midst of it and looked keenly, with his cold clear eyes and fixed and inscrutable smile, from one expectant face to another. There was no mistaking him whom all these people so eagerly awaited; he was my former wonder of Gray's Inn, the saviour of old Mr. Fowkes, and my obliging tipster.

But all my former wonder paled before this my latter. For he stood here like some young Eastern king among his slaves, one hand on his hip, the other at his chin, his face expressionless, his eyes fixed but unblinking. Meantime, the crowd, which had stretched out arms to him as he came, was now seated quietly on the grass, intently waiting, watching for a sign. They sat, all these people, in a wide ring about him, he in the midst, a hand to his chin.

Whether sign was made or not, I saw none; but after some moments of pause, a figure rose erect out of the ring and hobbled towards the boy. I made out an old woman, an old wreck of womanhood, a scant-haired, blue-lipped ruin of what had once been woman. I heard her snivel and sniff, and wheeze her "Lord ha' mercy!" as she went by, and slippering forwards on her miserable feet, hugging to her wasted sides what remnants of gown she had, stood fawning before the boy, within the sphere of light that came from him. If he loathed, or scorned, or pitied her, he showed no sign; if he saw her at all, his fixed eyes looked beyond her; if he abhorred her, his nostrils did not betray him. He stood like marble, and suffered what followed. It was strange. Enacting what seemed to be a proper rite, she put her shaking left hand upon his right shoulder, her right hand under his chin, as if to cup it; and then, with sniffs and wailings interspersed, came her petition to his merciful ears.

What she precisely asked of him, muttering, wheezing, whining, snivelling as she did, repeating herself, with her burthen of "Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" I don't know. Her lost girl, her fine upstanding girl, her Nance, her only one, figured in it as needing mercy. Her "Oh, sir, I ask you kindly!" and "Oh, sir, for this once!" made me sick. Yet he bore with her as she ran on, dribbling tears and gin in a mingled flow; he bore with her, heard her in silence, and in the end, by a look which I was not able to discover, quieted and sent her shuffling back to her place. So soon as she was down, the Life-guardsman was on his feet—a fine figure of a man. He marched unfaltering up, stiffened, saluted, and then, observing the ritual of hand to shoulder, hand to chin, spoke out his piece like the honest fellow he was—spoke it aloud and without fear, evenly and plainly. I thought that he had got it by heart, as I thought also of another person I was to hear by and by. He wanted—badly, it seemed—news of his sweetheart, whom he was careful to call Miss Dixon. She had last been heard of outside the Brixton Bon Marché, where she had been seen, with a lady friend, talking to two "young chaps" in Volunteer uniform. They went up the Brixton Road towards Acre Lane, and Miss Dixon, at any rate, was never heard of again. It was wearing him out; he wasn't the man he had been, and had no zest for his meals. She had never written; his letters to her had come back through the "Dead Office." He thought he should go out of his mind sometimes—was afraid to shave, not knowing what he might be after with "them things." If anything could be done for him, he should be thankful. Miss Dixon was very well connected, and sang in a choir. Here he stopped, saluted, turned and marched away into the night. I heard him pass a word or two to the policeman, who turned aside and

blew his nose. The hospital nurse, who spoke in a feverish whisper, then a young woman who may or may not have been a shop-girl, and who cried and rocked herself about, followed; and then, to my extreme amazement, two ladies with cloaks and hoods over evening gowns—one of them a Mrs. Stanhope, well known to me. The taller and younger lady, chaperoned by my friend, I did not recognise. Her face was hidden by her hood.

I was now more than interested; it seemed to me that I was, in a sense, implicated. At any rate, I felt very delicate about overhearing what was to come. It is one thing to become absorbed in a ritual the like of which, in mid-London, you can never have experienced before, but quite another thing to listen to the secret desires of a friend in whose house you may have dined within the month. However, by whatever casuistries I may have compassed it, I did remain. Let me hope, nay, let me believe of myself that if the postulant had proved to be my friend, Mrs. Shrewton Stanhope herself, I should either have stopped my ears or immediately retired.

But Mrs. Stanhope, I saw at once, was no more than *dame de compagnie*. She stood in mid-ring, with bent head and hands clasped before her, while the graceful hooded girl approached nearer to the mysterious oracle, and fulfilled the formal rites demanded of all who sought his help. Her ringed left hand was laid upon his right shoulder, her fair right hand upheld his chin. When she began to speak, which she did immediately and without a tremor, I once more imagined her having got her words by heart. It was very simple, but, such as it was, said without shame. "I am very unhappy about a certain person. It is Captain Maxfield. I am engaged to him, and want to break it off. I must do that—I must indeed. If I don't, I shall do a more dreadful thing. I do hope you will help me. Mrs.—my friend—was sure that you would. I do hope so. I am very unhappy." She had commanded her voice until the very end, but, as she pitied herself, there came a break in it. I heard her catch her breath, I thought she would fall; and so did Mrs. Stanhope, it was clear, for she went hurriedly forward and put an arm round her waist. The younger lady drooped to her shoulder. Mrs. Stanhope inclined her head to the Person—not a sign from him, mind you—and gently withdrew her charge from the ring. The pair then hurried across the Park in the direction of Knightsbridge, and left me, I may admit, consuming in the fire of curiosity and excitement which they had lit.

Petitions succeeded, of various interest, of extreme interest, really, of an intimacy so close as to take the breath away, but they seemed pale and ineffectual to me. Before all or nearly all of the waiting throng had been heard, I saw uneasiness spread about it. Face turned to face, head to head; subtle but unmistakable movements indicated unrest. Then, of the suddenest, amid lifted hands and sighed-forth prayers, the youthful object of so much entreaty, receiver of so many secret sorrows, seemed to fade and, without effort, to recede. I know not how else to describe his departure. He backed away, as it were, into the dark. The people were on their feet ere this. Sighs, wailings, appeals, sobs, adjurations, broke the quietness of the night. Some ran stumbling after him with extended arms; most of them stayed where they were, watching him fade, hoping against hope. He emptied himself, so to speak, of light; he faded backwards, diminishing himself to a luminous haze, to a blur, to a point of light. Thus he was gone. The disappointed crept silently away, each into silence, solitude, and the night, and I found myself alone with the policeman—back once more in the dreadful stoicism of London's victims.

Now, what, in the name of Heaven, was all this? I asked him, and must have it. He gave me some particulars, admitting at the outset that it was a "go." "They seem to think," he said, "that they will get what they want out of him—by wire. Let him bring them a wire in the morning—that's the way of it. Anything in life, from sudden death to a penn'orth of bird-seed! Death! Ah, I've heard 'em cringe to him for death, times and again. They crawl for it—must have it. Can't do it themselves, d'ye see. No, no. Let him do it—somehow. Once a week, during the season—his season, I should say, because he ain't here always, by no means—they gets about like this; and how they know where to spot him is more than I can tell you. If I knew it, I would, but I don't. Nobody knows that, and yet they do know it. Sometimes he's to be found here two weeks running; then it'll be the Regent's Park or the knoll in the Green Park. He's had 'em all the way to Hampstead before now, and Primrose Hill's a likely place, they tell me. Telegrams—that's what he gives them, if he's got the mind. But they don't get all they want, not by no

means. And some of 'em gets more than they want, by a lot." He thought, then chuckled at a rather grim instance.

"Why, there was old Jack Withers—'blue-nosed Jack,' they calls him—who works a Hammersmith 'bus. Did you ever hear of that? That was a good one, if you like. Now, you listen. This Jack was coming up the Brompton Road on his 'bus, and I was on duty by the Boltons, and see him coming. There was that young fellow, too—him we've just had here—standing quiet by a pillar-box, reading a letter. One foot he had in the roadway, and his back to the 'bus. Up comes old Jack, pushing his horses, and sees the boy. Gives a great howl, like a tom-cat. 'Hi, you young frog-spawn,' he says, 'out of my road!' and startled the lad. I see him look up at Jack very steady, and keep his eye on him. I thought to myself, there's something to pay on delivery, my boy, for this here. Jack owned up to it afterwards that he felt queer, but he forgot about it. Now, if you'll believe me, sir, the very next morning Jack was at London Bridge after his second journey, when up comes this boy, sauntering into the yard. Comes up to Jack and nods. 'Name of Withers?' he says. 'That's me,' says old Jack. 'Thought so,' he says. 'Telegram for you.' Jack takes it, opens it, goes all white. 'Good Heavens!' he says; 'My wife's dead!' She'd been knocked down by a Pickford that morning, sure as a gun. What do you think of that for a start?

"He served Spotty Smith, the fried eel man, just the very same, and lots more I could tell you about. They call him Quidnunc—Mister Quidnunc, too, and don't you forget it. There's that about him I—well, sir, if it was to come to it that I had to lay a hand on him for something out of Queer Street, I shouldn't know how to do it. Now, I'm telling you a fact. I shouldn't—know—how—to—do it."

He was not, obviously, telling me a fact, but certainly he was much in earnest. I commented upon the diversity of the company, and so learned the name of my friend Mrs. Stanhope's friend. He clacked his tongue. "Bless you," he said, "I've seen better than to-night, though we did have a slap-up ladyship and all. That was Lady Emily Rich, that young thing was. Earl of Richborough's family — Grosvenor Place. But we had a duchess or something here one night—oh, and a bishop another! You'd never believe the tales we hear. He's known to every night constable from Woolwich to Putney Bridge, and the company he gets about him you'd never believe. High and low, and all huddled together like so many babes in a Foundling. No distinction. You saw old Mother Misery get first look in to-night? My lady waited her turn, like a good girl!" His voice sank to a whisper. "They tell me he's the only living soul—if he is a living soul—that's ever been inside the Stock Exchange and come out tidy. He goes and comes in as he likes—quite the welcome little stranger. They all know him in Throgmorton Street. No, no. There's more in this than meets the eye, sir. He's not like you and me. But it's no business of mine. He don't go down in my pocket-book, I can tell you. I keep out of his way—and with reason. He never did no harm to me, nor shan't, if I can help it. Quidnunc—Mister Quidnunc! He might be a herald angel, for all I know."

I went my ways home and to bed, but was not done with Quidnunc.

The next day, which was the first day of the Eton and Harrow match, I read a short paragraph in *The Evening News* headed, "Painful Scene at Lord's," to the effect that a lady lunching on Lord Richborough's drag had fainted upon the receipt of a telegram, and would have fallen had she not been caught by the messenger, "a strongly built youth," it said, "who thus saved what might have been a serious accident." That was all, but it gave me food for thought, and a suspicion, which Saturday confirmed in a sufficiently startling way. On that Saturday I went down to my club for luncheon, and was in the reading-room with *The Times*, which had no reference to the "painful scene" of the evening papers, when a man came in—Tendring by name—whom I knew quite well. We exchanged greetings, and sat with our newspapers, talking desultorily. A page-boy brought in a telegram for Tendring. He opened it and seemed thunderstruck. "Good Heavens!" I heard him say. "Good Heavens, here's trouble!" I murmured sympathetically, and then he turned to me, quite beyond the range where reticence avails one. "Look here," he said, "this is a shocking business. A man I know wires to me from Bow Street. He's been taken for forgery—that's the charge—and wants me to bail him out." He got up as he finished, and went to write his reply. I turned immediately to the page. "Is the boy waiting?" I asked. He was. I said, "Excuse me, Tendring."



"She appeared to be perfectly happy."

ran out of the room, and downstairs. There, in the hall, as I had expected, stood my inscrutable, steady-eyed, smiling oracle of the night. I stood, meeting his look as best I might. He showed no recognition of me whatsoever. Then, as I stood there, Tendring came down. "Call me a cab," he told the hall-porter; and to Quidnunc he said: "There's no answer. I'm going at once." Quidnunc went away.

Now, Tendring's friend, I learned by the evening paper, was one Captain Maxfield, of the Royal Engineers. He was committed for trial, bail refused. I may add that he got seven years.

So much for Captain Maxfield! But much more for Lady Emily Rich, of whose fate I have now to tell. My friend Mrs. Shrewton Stanhope was very reserved, would tell me nothing, even when I roundly said that I had fancied to see her in the Park one evening. She had the hardihood to meet my eyes with a blank denial, and very plainly there was nothing to be learned from her. A visit, many visits, to the London parks at the hour between eleven and midnight taught me no more; but being by now thoroughly interested in the affairs of Lady Emily Rich, I made it my business to get a glimpse of her. She was, it seemed, the only unmarried daughter of the large Richborough family, which had done so well in that sex and so badly in the other that there was not only no son, but no male heir to the title. That, indeed, expired with Lady Emily's father. I don't really know how many daughters there were or were not. Most of them married prosperously. One of them became a Roman princess, one married Walker, the American stock-jobber, with a couple of millions of money, another was Baroness de Grass—De Grass being a Jew; one became an Anglican nun, to the dismay of her family. Lady Emily, whose engagement to the wretched Maxfield was so dramatically terminated, was, I think, the youngest of them. I saw her one night, towards the end of the season, at the opera. Tendring, who was with me, pointed her out in a box. She was dressed in black and looked very scared. She hardly moved once throughout the evening, and, when people spoke to her, seemed not to hear. She was certainly a very pretty girl. It may have been my fancy, or it may not, but I could have sworn to the corner of a pinky-brown envelope sticking out of the bosom of her dress. I don't think I was mistaken; I had a good look through the glasses. She touched it shortly afterwards, and poked it down. At the end I saw her come out—a tall girl, rather thin, very pretty, certainly, but far from well. Her eyes haunted me; they had what is called a hag-ridden look. And yet, thought I, she had got her desire of Quidnunc. Ah, but had she? Hear the end of the tale.

I say that I saw her come out. That's not quite true. I saw her come down the staircase and stand with her party in the crowded lobby. She stood in it, but not of it, for her vague and shadowed eyes sought otherwhere than in those of the neat-haired young man who was chattering in front of her. She scanned, rather, the throng of people anxiously and guardedly at once, as if she was looking for somebody, and must not be seen to look. As time wore on, and the carriage delayed, her nervousness increased. She seemed to get paler, she shut her eyes once or twice as though to relieve the strain which watching and waiting put upon them; and then, quite suddenly, I saw that she had found what she expected; I saw that her empty eyes were now filled, that they held something without which they might have faded out. In a word, I saw her look fixedly, fiercely, and certainly at something beyond the lobby. Following the direction she gave me, I looked also. There, assuredly, in the portico, square, smiling, and assured of his will, I saw Quidnunc stand, and his light eyes upon hers. For quite a space of time, such as that in which you might count fifteen deliberately, those two looked at each other. Messages, I am sure, sped to and fro between them. His seemed to say: "Come, I have answered you. Now do you answer me." Hers cried her hurt: "Ah, but what can I do?" His, with their cool mastery of time and occasion: "You must do as I bid you. There's no other way." Hers pleaded, "Give me time," and his told her sternly, "I am master of time, since I made it." The throng of waiting people began to surge towards the door; out there in the night link-boys yelled great names. I heard "Lord Richborough's carriage!" and saw Lady Emily clap her hand to her side. I saw her reach the portico and stand there hastily covering her head with a black scarf; I saw her sway alone there, I saw her party go down the steps. The next moment Quidnunc flashed to her side. He said nothing, he did not touch her. He simply looked at her—intently, smiling, self-possessed, a master. Her face was averted; I could see her tremble; she bowed her head. Another

carriage was announced—the Richborough coach, then, was gone. I saw Quidnunc now put his hand upon her arm. She turned him her face; a faint and tender smile, very beautiful and touching, met his own. He drew her with him out of the press and into the humming dark. London never saw her again.

I don't attempt to explain what is to me inexplicable. Was my policeman right when he called Quidnunc a herald angel? Is there any substance behind the surmise that the ancient gods still sway the souls and bodies of men? Was Quidnunc that swift, remorseless, smiling messenger, the great god Hermes of the winged feet, the son of Maia? Who can answer these things? All I have to tell you, by way of an epilogue, is this. A curate of my acquaintance, a curate of St. Peter's, Eaton Square, some few years after these events, took his holiday in Greece. He went out as one of a tourist party, but, having more time at his disposal than was contemplated by the contracting agency, he stayed on, chartered a dragoman, and wandered far and wide. On his return he told me that he had seen Lady Emily Rich at Megalopolis, in Arcadia, and that he had spoken to her. He had seen her sitting on the door-step of a one-storied white house, spinning flax. She wore the costume of the peasantry, which he told me is very picturesque. A couple of half-naked children tumbled about her. They were beautiful as angels, he said, with curly golden hair and extremely light eyes. He noticed that particularly, and recurred to it more than once. Now, Lady Emily was a dark girl, with eyes so deeply blue as to be almost black.

My friend spoke to her, he said. He had seen that she recognised him—in fact, she bowed to him. He felt that he could not disregard that. Mere commonplaces were exchanged. She told him that her husband was away on a journey. She fancied that he had been in England, but she explained half laughingly that she knew very little about his affairs, and was quite content to leave them to him. She had her children to look after. My friend was surprised that she asked no question of England or family matters; but, in the circumstances, he added, he hardly liked to refer to them. She served him with bread and wine before he left her. All he could say was that she appeared to be perfectly happy.

It is odd, and perhaps it is no more than odd, that there was a famous temple of Hermes in Megalopolis in former times. Pindar, I believe, acclaims it in one of his Epinician Odes, but I have not been able to verify the reference.

A CHRISTMAS MONODY.

HATE fell asleep beside a fast-sealed stone
Under a winter tree;
Across the waste the great snowflakes were blown
Aslant an ice-bound sea.
Noël, Noël!—their pallid choirs entone
Love's white Nativity.

Through rifted clouds the silver stars keep ward
Above that Sleeper pale;
The north wind's lyre upon a muted cord
Whispers a funeral wail.
Dust unto dust the winnowing-fan and sword
And the strong threshing-flail.

Oh, Dreamer, can you hear, in your cold sleep,
The sullen requiem bell
Ring through the darkness where we weep
Our ultimate farewell
(Though Death the Herdsman herds you with his sheep),
Singing Noël, Noël?

UNA ARTEVELDE TAYLOR.

A Reputation for Benevolence.

By OWEN OLIVER.



URING the past fortnight five persons have asked me for subscriptions to what they were pleased to term charities. The last application was made in the smoking-room of my own club. I was half inclined to lay the matter before the committee, but when I mentioned it to the secretary, he dissuaded me.

"You see, Colonel," he said, "you have a reputation for benevolence."

"Then contradict it, sir," I said, "contradict it!"

I know what has set the slander about. I am writing this story to stop it. I am not a poor man, but I can't afford a reputation for benevolence.

I should have been saved all this annoyance if Clark and Middlemass had turned up at the club on Christmas evening to play bridge. They promised to come, but they telegraphed excuses at the last moment. I hate fools who don't know their own minds.

I couldn't get a decent four without them, and I was sick of reading old papers. So I decided to return to my flat and write another letter to *The Times* about the defects in military training. I don't know what our Army is coming to.

I had barely entered the front hall when I heard a horrible noise. It grew worse as I went up the stairs. Some people were actually playing a tinkling piano and singing. I knew at once that it must be the young couple who had taken the small flat over my study and dining-room. They ought never to have been let in. I objected to them strongly. At least, I did not object to them personally—I had never seen them—but to their baby. I told the proprietor, as soon as they came, that they must go, or I would.

"I don't pay a hundred and fifty pounds a year to be disturbed by a squalling brat," I stated.

He gave them notice at once, but they had a couple of months still to run at Christmas. So there they were, singing as if they owned the whole building. I went down and spoke to the hall-porter about the noise, but he fenced with me.

"It's Christmas Day, you see, sir," he said.

"Christmas fiddlesticks!" I told him. At least, that was the purport of my remark. The exact language was different.

As the porter would not take any steps to stop the nuisance, I went into my rooms and tried to find a quiet spot. The noise appeared to be exactly over my study. It also appeared to be exactly over the dining-room. I could not sit in the bedrooms, because the gas stoves were out of order. I would have gone in the kitchen, as I had given my man a holiday, but there was no fire there. I settled down in the study finally, but writing was impossible. They not only played and sang, but *jumped about!* Twice they knocked over chairs. When they ceased capering about like lunatics, they sang some musical comedy thing, with "whoops" in it, about ten times. I felt as though I'd like to send a bullet through the ceiling.

I gave them the credit of believing that they supposed me to be out. I decided to let them know that I was in. I could go up and borrow a box of matches, I thought, and then they would probably apologise for disturbing me and be quiet afterwards. I went up and knocked at their door. The young man came and opened it. He was a gentleman. The girl—she wasn't much more—stood in the doorway of their sitting-room, holding the baby in her arms. She was a nice-looking, fair young lady. The baby had pulled some of her hair loose. My wife was a fair woman, too, and *her* hair used to fall out like that when she romped with our baby. . . . If they had lived, I shouldn't have been such a surly old beggar, perhaps. . . .

I forgot what I was going to say for a moment, and the young fellow spoke first.

"I know we're making an awful row, sir," he owned. "We didn't know you were in." He had a pleasant voice.

"I—I came for a box of matches," I said. I couldn't take my eyes off the girl and the baby. Harry used to tug at my wife's hair like that, and she wouldn't let me take his

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hands off, though he made her eyes water. "You are very—very like my wife, my dear," I said. "She's—she's been gone these thirty years, and—and the baby."

The girl walked over to the hall-door. Her eyes *were* wet, I noticed. I suppose the little beggar had been tugging hard. She touched my arm.

"Do please come in," she said. "Do *please* come in."

I went in.

"We were romping to amuse baby," she explained. "Oh, leave go, you little rascal!"

"Allow me," I said, and undid his fingers from her hair. He grabbed mine instead, and the father undid his fingers from that. Then he grabbed his father's, and laughed out loud. We all four laughed.

"He is thirteen months old," the girl told me, "and we think he is the naughtiest little boy that ever was."

I thought that of my baby.

"He is a very fine boy," I said. "I was going to make my lad a soldier, but—— I am afraid that I am disturbing your—your Christmas festivities."

"Oh, no!" the young fellow denied awkwardly. He looked at the girl.

"We won't let you think that," she told me. Women have more tact than men. My wife always knew how to put visitors at their ease. "We'll go on with the festivities presently. We call it baby's party, but it's for us too, really." She laughed like a child. My wife always kept her girlish laugh. "He can stand alone. He wants to walk to you. May he?"

I held out my hands, and the youngster took two tottering steps, and tumbled into them. He made a queer, chuckling noise like "goo-goo." My boy—I won't write any more about him.

"Hear tick-tick," I offered, and took him on my knee. He "goo-goo'd" again at the watch. "It isn't necessary to wish *you* a Merry Christmas," I told his parents.

The young fellow sighed. The girl started to sigh, but laughed instead.

"We have a lot to be thankful for," she said, and touched her husband's arm.

"By Jove, yes!" he agreed. "We are—all right, you know. . . . He'll claw it, sir!"

I was showing the boy the works of the watch. Harry always liked to see them, I remembered.

"He won't hurt it," I said. "Yes, you have a deal to be thankful for. You have a Christmas-tree for him, I see."

"That is Trix's present," the husband explained. "Really hers, you know, sir—savings out of the housekeeping." He seemed quite proud of the girl. He kept his eyes on her admiringly whenever she was talking, I noticed.

"Fred put the train on," the young wife told me, "and the furry rabbit. It's to save my hair. I'm afraid I must look very untidy."

She tried to push in the wisps that the young wretch had clawed loose.

"That is what makes me feel at home," I told her.

"Then I'm glad! . . . Fred has some more presents for him. He was going to—well, I expect you'll laugh at us—he was going to dress up as Father Christmas and bring them!"

"It was only nonsense," the young fellow apologised. "I can give them to him just as well without any tomfoolery."

"If I am stopping the fun," I said, "I must go."

I held out the baby, but they laughed, and wouldn't take him.

"You mustn't go," the girl pleaded. "We should be so very sorry. You'll like to see Father Christmas, won't you, Colonel—Colonel Gray, isn't it?"

"Late Royal Loamshires," I said.

"C.B., D.S.O.," the young fellow added. "I looked it up in the Army List when"—the girl made a horrified movement—"when we came here," he concluded.

I thought it was probably when they heard of my objection to them as neighbours. I decided to see the proprietor on the subject the next day. If there were no squalling babies, there would be no soldiers, and, on reconsideration, I did not see how I could properly object to the baby. Besides, he didn't squall so very much—no more than my little Harry did.

"I shall like to see Father Christmas," I declared; "and, really, you are cheering me up so much that I don't think I shall be a wet blanket. My men used to get up a Father Christmas sometimes. It was my wife who put the idea into their heads. I was adjutant then, and she took a great interest in the regiment. Her father was colonel, and she was very like you, my dear."

"I am glad," the girl said gently.

I told them about the regimental celebrations, and the time that Father Christmas stepped on a slide coming over from the canteen. I should have been down myself, coming from the mess-room, if the adjutant hadn't caught me. I was colonel then.

They laughed a good deal at my stories, and then they fetched the "make-up." It was a red opera-cloak of the girl's, trimmed with white fur—my wife had one like it—and a white beard and wig that they had made of tow and dipped in white paint, and a long red nose, and some rouge for the face.

"It isn't mine," the girl told me, with her ready laugh. She needn't have said that. There was nothing artificial about her. If there had been, she wouldn't have reminded me of my wife.

Fred went out to dress up in the ridiculous things. He called his wife to help him stick on the beard. I heard the sound of a kiss quite distinctly. I held the baby while she was gone. He got hold of my moustache and pulled two long hairs out. He was a fine, hearty little fellow. When his mother returned, he held up his trophies. She scolded him. It made him laugh.

"You ought to put him in the Army," I told her.

"I expect he'll have to be a chimney-sweep," she said, with a smile and a shake of her pretty head, "or a clerk, like his poor old father. Won't you, lovely soldier boy?"

"Your husband is—er—in the City?" I suggested.

"Ye-es," she said, "he was, but—you see, business is bad, and—— Don't say anything about it before him. He worked so hard, and he thought—— He'll soon get something else, and—— Here he comes."

He came in dressed in the ridiculous costume. The baby looked at him and gave a yell of fright. Then he tumbled off my knee and scrambled to his mother. When Father Christmas approached, he kicked and punched at him. Upon my soul, I believe the little chap wasn't afraid for himself, but for his mother.

His father pulled off his beard and hair, and they both hugged the boy. His mother called him silly pet names like women do. I used to laugh at Elsa about it. She called Harry "Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief." She called me "General" . . . "Good-bye, General! . . . You'll find your little soldier waiting at the first outpost" . . . They were her last words. I used to call her "Little Soldier" . . . I don't know why I called her "little." She was slight and tall. The boy favoured her. The young couple's boy was the same build of chap.

"He ought to go in the Army," I told them. I liked the way he tried to protect his mother.

"If I make a fortune, he shall," his father said. "I was meant for the Army myself, but the governor died. I wanted to enlist and try to work my way up, but there was Trix. We were always sweethearts. So I went in for business, and—— We won't bother you with our affairs. I'll put the kid to bed while Trix talks to you, if you don't mind, and then perhaps you'd have a bit of supper with us? We should feel honoured."

I began to make excuses, but the girl touched my arm.

"Please!" she begged. "We aren't just being polite. We want you to."

"Thank you, my dear," I said. "Thank you! I shall like to talk to you."

The baby had another tug at my moustache when his father held him out to say "Good night." He waved his hand and called "Bye, bye!" from the door. His mother rushed to give him another kiss. Then she came and sat down and talked to me. It was nice to have someone come in, she declared, for they knew scarcely anybody, and they would be so pleased if I would call and see baby sometimes while we were neighbours.

"I hope that will be for a long time," I said.

"We are leaving in February," she told me.

"Oh," I said hastily, "that was a misunderstanding—quite a misunderstanding. I will explain to the proprietor to-morrow. That will be all right."

She shook her head.

"We must go," she said decidedly.

"My dear," I entreated, "you won't bear malice on account of the disagreeableness of a—a very disagreeable old man. I didn't know——"

"No, no," she said, "it isn't that. It is—the rooms are too expensive. You see, they've had losses at Fred's place, and are reducing the staff . . . I dare say he'll soon get something else. They say that they will give him the very best of recommendations"—she blinked at the fire—"the very best of recommendations," she repeated.

"I see," I said. "I see. Meanwhile, I wonder if you'll forgive a meddlesome old fellow who means well? What are you going to do, my dear?"

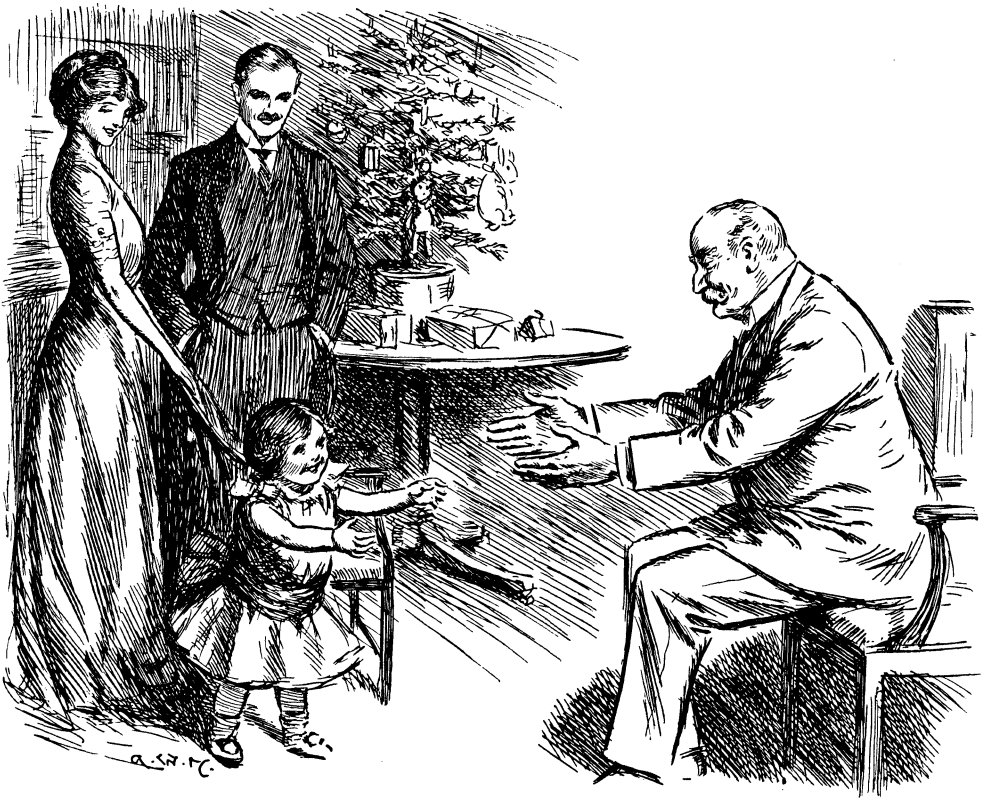
"I don't know," the girl said. "We've a few pounds, and I could give music lessons. . . . You think he'll find something, don't you? His recommendations are *very* good, and he can speak French and German well. He is *so* clever, if he could only get a chance."

"He will find something soon," I assured her. "I might hear of someone who wants a secretary or something of the kind. The French and German would be a recommendation, and—I think I might manage it. I will write to my brother-in-law. He is in business."

The girl clapped her hands.

"I think you are Father Christmas!" she declared. "I don't know why you are so good to us." I looked at the fire and sighed. "because I rather think that I have some friends who want a correspondence clerk, or a secretary, and Mrs. Fremlin tells me that you might possibly be available."

"I am very much available, sir," he said; "and—and—— Look here, sir, if you can get me a place, I'll—I'll try about as hard as a fellow ever did to do you credit. Perhaps you'll believe me, because—well, you've seen Trix and sonny, and they're the sort a decent chap *would* work for, sir."



"He made a queer, chuckling noise."

"I think I do," she said softly. "Would you like to tell me about them?"

I told her about Elsa and the boy. I hadn't talked to anyone about them for five-and-twenty years. But the girl was like her. She cried softly. . . . Elsa was always soft-hearted, and the youngsters always came to her with their troubles.

She pretended to be very cheerful when her husband came in. He had waited till the baby was asleep. They took turns, he explained. Elsa and I used to do that. Sometimes we sat by the little chap together.

"It's lucky I looked in," I told Fred,

"I believe you," I answered. "You shall have a place. You can rely upon me."

I thought, as soon as I had made the promise, that I had been rather rash. In a few days I was sure that I had been. My brother-in-law wrote back that he was reducing his staff, and so were all the people he knew in business. Everyone I met who kept a secretary had one, except Lord Maybourne, who was a sub. in the regiment when I was adjutant. He was going to try to do without the luxury, he said.

"Times are bad, Gray," he explained. "I can't get the sort of fellow I want under

three hundred, and I can't afford more than a hundred and fifty. I'd rather be without anyone than have a bounder."

"Yes," I agreed—"yes. Look here, Maybourne. Suppose we shared a secretary between us—a hundred and fifty apiece? I've got nothing for him to do, and you could have him all the time."

"But what are you driving at?"

"There's a young fellow in the flat over mine," I explained, "and his wife is—is like mine when I married her, three-and-thirty years ago. Their boy's the age of mine, when . . . I always meant to make a soldier of him. I dare say I'm an old fool!"

"Have a drink," Maybourne said hastily. He walked away and rang the bell.

We didn't talk till the waiter had brought the drinks.

"We've known one another a good many years," Maybourne said then. "My wife was speaking of yours on Christmas Day. 'The Little Soldier,' you used to call her. There wasn't a Tommy in the good old regiment who didn't worship her. We've known one another a deuced long time."

"A deuced long time," I agreed.

"I remember," he went on, "when I was a young ass, and you pulled me up; and then you set Mrs. Gray on to me, and she talked to me like a big sister, and—Heaven bless her—— I'll take the chap at two hundred. You can give him the other hundred as an allowance, you know."

"I don't suppose he'd take it," I explained. "I thought, if you'd let me, I'd arrange it with you. If he goes on all right, I might as well leave something to the boy as to charities. They could make a soldier of him. Elsa and I always wanted to put a boy in the Army. If it hadn't been for the cursed fever——"

"The cursed fever," Maybourne repeated. "It took the best woman in the regiment, and the best little chap, and—— They'll wait for you, like good soldiers. Dear old man! Yes, we'll arrange it—yes, yes!"

"You won't give me away?" I stipulated.

"Of course not," he promised. "As if I would!"

He wouldn't intentionally, of course, but he never could hold his tongue.

He didn't actually give me away, but he got talking to people in general terms about my "benevolence," and that's how I've come to be pestered with all these demands. So I've put down the facts for everyone to see that there was no question of charity. I merely spent a little of my superfluity on doing something to please myself.

Maybourne did give me away, however, in a different fashion. He found Fremlin so useful that he used him for everything, even his private accounts. The young beggar is as sharp as a needle, and as soon as he got the run of those accounts, he guessed what had happened. I went in one evening to see the "soldier boy"—that's what I call the baby—and I found Fred and Trix in a fearful state of excitement.

They could never thank me enough, they said, and they would never cease to regard me with respect and affection. They said "affection" most distinctly. But they couldn't take my money, and they would pay back what he had had.

I got up and put down the baby, and asked for my hat and stick. I hadn't been in such a rage since that cad Jones compared some Territorials to the Loamshires.

"It is about twenty-seven pounds to date," I said fiercely. "I shall be obliged if you will render me an account with it, showing how it has been saved. Then I can spread it out on the table, and gloat over it. 'Three pounds for Trix going without a winter jacket.' 'A sovereign for Fred wearing a shabby hat.' 'Ten shillings for the soldier boy crying for toys.' . . . *Dash* you!"

I was making for the door, and then Trix flung her arms round my neck and actually kissed me. The baby hung on to my legs and squealed "Sojer boy, too!" Fred put his arm through mine.

"I was wrong about paying back, sir," he owned. "But as regards the future, you know, sir——"

"You're wrong about that, too," cried Trix. "He *wants* to do it. He loves the soldier boy."

"And you, too," I said, "my dear, and—and Fred. The scoundrel!" I scowled at him. "I'm doing it just to please myself, mind, as Trix says."

"I didn't say that exactly, dear," she contradicted.

"Hold your tongue, miss!" I commanded. "We'll have no more nonsense about 'charity' and 'gratitude.' I shall adopt you as my son and daughter and grandchild, and then I can give you what I like."

If a man has no family, and chooses to adopt one, he does it to please himself, and there's no question of "benevolence." It doesn't follow that he is a doddering old idiot, who is prepared to subscribe to The Society for Providing Cages for Stray Parrots. I shall kick the next man who twits me with a reputation for benevolence.

MAROONED.

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS,

Author of "Kings in Exile," "The House in the Water," "The Backwoodsmen," etc.

THE island was a mere sandbank off the low flat coast. Not a tree broke its bleak levels, not even a shrub. But the long, sparse, gritty stalks of the marsh-grass clothed it everywhere above tide-mark, and a tiny rivulet of sweet water, flowing from a spring at its centre, drew a riband of inland herbage and tenderer green across the harsh and sombre yellow-grey of the grass. One would not have chosen the island as an alluring place to set one's habitation, yet at its seaward end, where the changing tides were never still, stood a spacious, one-storied, wide-verandahed cottage, with a low shed behind it. The one virtue that this lone plot of sea-rejected sand could boast was coolness. When the neighbour mainland would be sweltering, day and night alike, under a breathless heat, out here on the island there was always a cool wind blowing. Therefore a wise city dweller had appropriated the sea waif, and built his summer home thereon, where the tonic air might bring back the roses to the pale cheeks of his children.

The family came to the island towards the end of June. In the first week of September they went away, leaving every door and window of house and shed securely shuttered, bolted or barred against the winter's storms. A roomy boat, rowed by two fishermen, carried them across the half-mile of racing tides that separated them from the mainland. The elders of the household were not sorry to get back to the distractions of the world of men, after two months of the companionship of wind and sun and waves and waving grass-tops. But the children went with tear-stained faces. They were leaving behind them their household pet, the invariable comrade of their migrations, a handsome moon-faced cat, striped like a tiger. The animal had disappeared two days before, vanishing mysteriously from the naked face of the island. The only reasonable explanation seemed to be that she had been snapped up by a passing eagle.

The cat, meanwhile, was fast prisoner at the other end of the island, hidden beneath a broken barrel and some hundredweight of drifted sand.

The old barrel, with the staves battered out on one side in some past encounter with the tides, had stood half buried on the crest of a sand-ridge raised by the long prevailing wind. Under its lee the cat had found a sheltered hollow, full of sun, where she had been wont to lie curled up for hours at a time, basking and sleeping. Meanwhile, the sand had been steadily piling itself higher and higher behind the unstable barrier. At last, it had piled too high, and suddenly, before a stronger gust, the barrel had come toppling over beneath a mass of sand, burying the sleeping cat out of sight and light; but at the same time the sound half of the barrel had formed a safe roof to her prison, and she was neither crushed nor smothered. When the children, in their anxious search all over the island, came upon the mound of fine white sand, they gave it but one careless look. They could not hear the faint cries that came at intervals from the close darkness within. So they went away sorrowfully, little dreaming that their friend was imprisoned almost beneath their feet.

For three days the prisoner kept up her intermittent appeals for help. On the third day the wind changed, and presently blew up a gale. In a few hours it had uncovered the barrel. At one corner a tiny spot of light appeared. Eagerly the cat stuck her paw through the hole. When she withdrew it again, the hole was considerably enlarged. She took the hint, and fell to scratching. At first her efforts were rather aimless; but presently, whether by good luck or quick sagacity, she learned to make her scratching more effective. The opening rapidly enlarged, and she squeezed her way out.

The wind was tearing madly across the island, filled with flying sand. The seas hurled themselves trampling up the beach

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with the uproar of a bombardment. The scourged grasses lay pallid, bowed flat in long quivering ranks. Over the turmoil the sun stared down from a deep unclouded blue. The cat, when she first met the full force of the gale, was fairly blown off her feet. As soon as she could recover herself, she crouched low and darted into the grass for shelter. But there was little shelter there, the long stalks being held down almost level as if by an implacable hand. Through their lashed lines, however, she sped straight before the gale, making for the cottage at the other end of the island, where she would find, as she fondly imagined, not only food and shelter, but loving comfort to make her forget her terrors.

Unutterably still and desolate in the bright sunshine, and under the howling of the wind, the house frightened her. She could not understand the tight-closed shutters, the blind unresponding doors that would no longer open to her anxious appeal. The wind swept her savagely across the naked verandah. Climbing with difficulty to the dining-room window-sill, where so often she had been let in, she clung there a few moments and yowled heart-brokenly. Then, in a sudden panic, she jumped down and ran to the shed. That, too, was closed. She had never seen the shed doors closed, and could not understand it. Cautiously she crept around the foundations, but these had been honestly and efficiently constructed. There was no such thing as getting in that way. On every side it was nothing but a dead face, dead and forbidding, that the old familiar house confronted her with.

The cat had always been so coddled and pampered by the children that she had had no need to forage for herself; but, fortunately for her now, she had learned to hunt the marsh-mice and grass-sparrows for amusement. So now, being ravenous from her long fast under the sand, she slunk mournfully away from the deserted house, and crept along, under the lee of a sand-ridge, to a little grassy hollow which she knew. Here the gale caught only the tops of the grasses, bending but not prostrating them; and here, in the warmth and comparative calm, the furry little marsh-folk, mice and shrews, were going about their business undisturbed. The cat, quick and stealthy, soon caught one, and eased the ferocity of her hunger. She caught several. And then, making her way back to the house, she spent hours in heart-sick prowling, around it and around, sniffing and peering, yowling piteously on threshold and window-sill, and every now and then being blown ignominiously across the smooth, naked expanse of the verandah floor. At last, hopelessly discouraged, she curled herself up out of the wind, beneath the children's window, and went to sleep.

On the following day the gale died down, and the salt-grass once more lifted its tops, full of flitting birds and small brown-and-yellow autumn butterflies, under the golden September sun. Desolate though the island was, it swarmed, nevertheless, with the minute busy life of the grass-stems and the sand-flats. Mice, crickets, sand-hoppers—the cat had no need to go hungry or unoccupied. She went all over house and shed again, from foundation to roof and chimney-top, yowling from time to time in a great, hollow, melancholy voice that might have been heard all across the island had there been anyone to hear, and again, from time to time, meowing in small piteous tones no bigger than a kitten's. For hours at a time, when hunger did not drive her to the hunt, she would sit expectant on the window-ledge, or before the door, or on the verandah steps, hoping that at any instant door or window might open, and dear familiar voices call her in. When she did go hunting, she hunted with peculiar ferocity, as if to avenge herself for some great but dimly apprehended wrong.

In spite of her loneliness and grief, the life of the island prisoner during the next two or three weeks was by no means one of hardship. Besides her abundant food of birds and mice, she quickly learned to catch tiny fish in the mouth of the rivulet, where salt water and fresh water met. It was an exciting game, and she became expert at dashing the grey tom-cod and blue-and-silver sand-lance far up the slope with a sweep of her armed paw. But when the equinoctial storms roared down upon the island, with furious rain and low black clouds torn to shreds, then life became more difficult for her. Game all took to cover, where it was hard to find—vanishing mysteriously. It was hard to get around in the drenched and lashing grass, and, moreover, she loathed wet. Most of the time she went hungry, sitting sullen and desolate under the lee of the house, glaring out defiantly at the rush and battling tumult of the waves.

The storm lasted nearly ten days before it blew itself clean out. On the eighth day the abandoned wreck of a small Nova Scotia schooner drove ashore, battered out of all likeness to a ship. But, hulk as it was, it

had passengers of a sort. A horde of bedraggled rats got through the surf and scurried into the hiding of the grass-roots. They promptly made themselves at home, burrowing under the grass and beneath old half-buried timbers, and carrying panic into the ranks of the mice and shrews. When the storm was over, the cat had a decided surprise in her first long hunting expedition. Something had rustled the grass heavily, and she trailed it, expecting a particularly large, fat marsh-mouse. When she pounced, and alighted upon an immense old ship's rat, many-voyaged and many-battled, she got badly bitten. Such an experience had never before fallen to her lot. At first she felt so injured that she was on the point of backing out and running away. Then her latent pugnacity awoke, and the fire of far-off ancestors. She flung herself into the fight with a rage that took no accounting of the wounds she got; and the struggle was soon over. Hungry though she was, she dragged the slain rat all the way to the house, and laid it proudly on the verandah floor before the door, as if displaying it to the eyes of her vanished friends. For a few moments she stood over it, waiting hopefully. Perhaps she had a wistful idea that so splendid an offering might melt the hearts of the absent ones and persuade them to come back. Nothing happened, however; so she sadly dragged the prize down the steps again to her accustomed lair in the sand, and ate it up all but the tail. Her wounds, faithfully licked, soon healed themselves in that clean and tonic air, and after that, having learned how to handle such big game, she no more got bitten.

During the first full moon after her abandonment, the first week in October, the island was visited by still weather, with sharp night frosts. The cat discovered then that it was most exciting to hunt by night and do her sleeping in the day-time. It was a natural reversion to the instincts of her ancestors, but it came to her as a discovery. She found that now, under the strange whiteness of the moon, all her game was astir, except the birds. And the birds had all fled to the mainland during the storm, gathering for the southward flight. The blanched grasses, she found, were now everywhere a-rustle, and everywhere vague, spectral little shapes went darting, with thin squeaks, across the ghostly white sands. Also, she made the acquaintance of a new bird, which she regarded at first uneasily and then with vengeful wrath. This was the brown marsh-owl, which came over from the mainland to do some autumn mouse-hunting. There were two pairs of these big, downy-winged, round-eyed, voracious hunters, and they did not know there was a cat on the island.

The cat, spying one of them as it swooped soundlessly hither and thither over the silvered grass-tops, crouched with flattened ears. With its wide spread of wing it looked bigger than herself, and the great round face, with hooked beak and wild staring eyes, appeared extremely formidable. However, she was no coward, and presently, though not without reasonable caution, she went about her hunting. Suddenly the owl caught a partial glimpse of her in the grass, probably of her ears or head. He swooped, and at the same instant she sprang upwards to meet the assault, spitting and growling harshly, and striking with unsheathed claws. With a frantic flapping of his great wings, the owl checked himself and drew back into the air, just escaping the clutch of those indignant claws. After that the marsh-owls were careful to give her a wide berth. They realised that the black-striped animal, with the quick spring and the clutching claws, was not to be interfered with. They perceived that she was some relation of that dangerous prowler, the lynx. But if they were disturbed by the presence on the island of so dangerous a rival as the cat, they were amply compensated by the coming of the rats, which afforded them fine hunting of a kind which they had never before experienced. In spite of all this hunting, however, the furry life of the marsh-grass was so teeming, so inexhaustible, that the depredations of cat, rats, and owls were powerless to make more than a passing impression upon it. So the hunting and the merrymaking went on side by side under the indifferent moon, and the untouched swarms whom Fate passed by were as indifferent as the moon herself to the mysterious disappearances of their fellows.

As winter drew on, with bursts of sharp cold and changing winds that forced her to be continually moving her refuge, the cat grew more and more unhappy. She felt her homelessness keenly. Nowhere on the whole island could she find a nook where she might feel secure from both wind and rain. As for the old barrel, the first cause of her misfortunes, there was no help in that. The winds had long ago turned it completely over, open to the sky, then drifted it full of sand, and reburied it. And in any case the cat would have been afraid to go near it again; she had no short memory. So it came about that she

alone, of all the island dwellers, had no shelter to turn to when the real winter arrived, with snows that smothered the grass-tops out of sight, and frosts that lined the shore with grinding ice-cakes. The rats had their holes under the buried fragments of wreckage; the mice and shrews had their deep warm tunnels; the owls had nests in hollow trees far away in the forests of the mainland. But the cat, shivering and frightened, could do nothing but crouch against the blind walls of the unrelenting house, and let the snow whirl itself and pile itself about her.

And now, in her misery, she found her food cut off. The mice ran secure in their hidden runways, where the grass-roots on either side of them gave them easy and abundant provender. The rats, too, were out of sight, digging burrows themselves in the soft snow, in the hope of intercepting some of the tunnels of the mice, and now and then snapping up an unwary passer-by. The ice-fringe, crumbling and heaving under the ruthless tide, put an end to her fishing. She would have tried to capture one of the formidable owls, in her hunger, but the owls no longer came to the island. They would return, no doubt, later in the season, when the snow had hardened, and the mice had begun to come out and play on the surface, but for the present they were following an easier chase in the deeps of the upland forest.

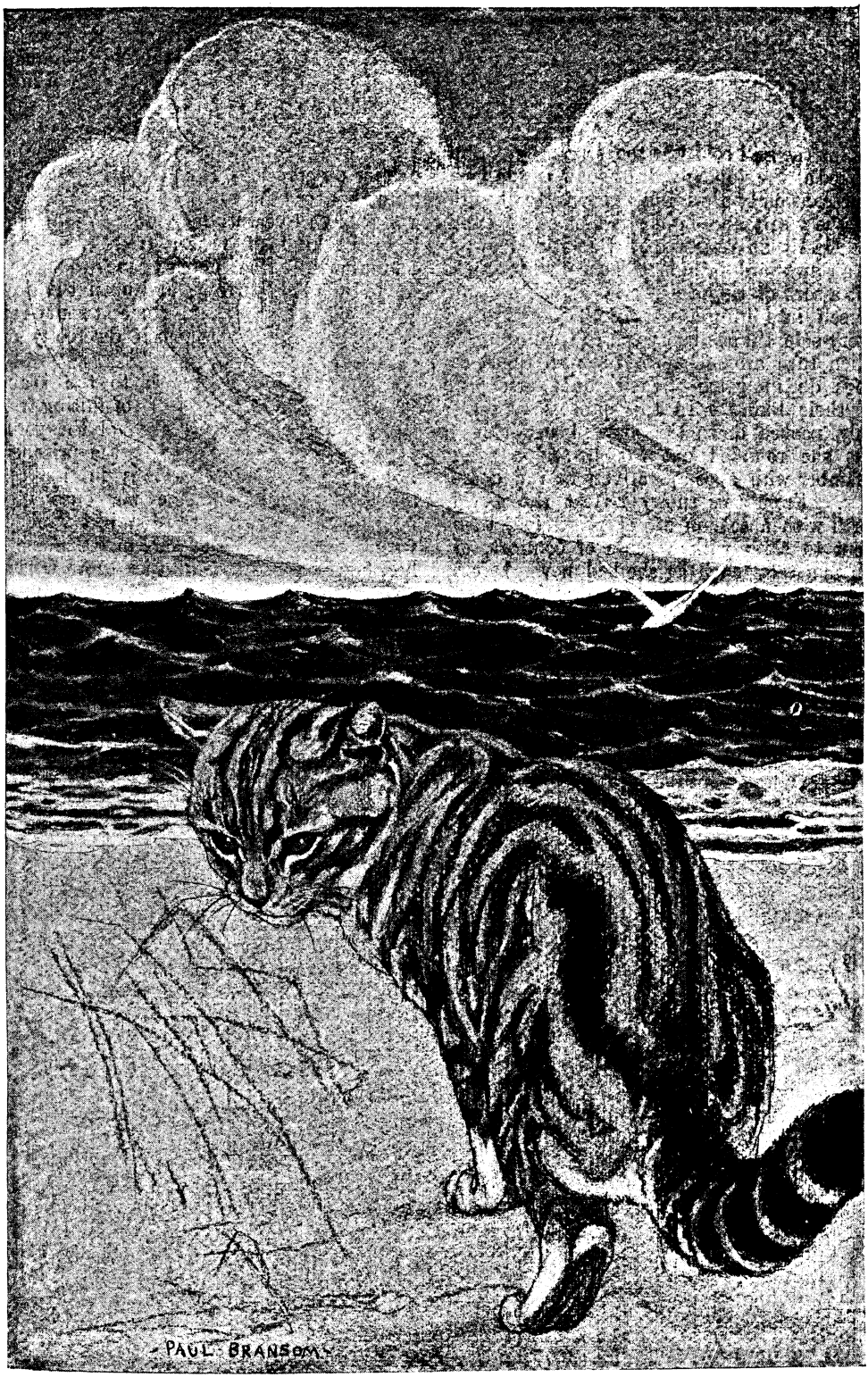
When the snow had stopped falling, and the sun came out again, there fell such keen cold as the cat had never known before. Starving as she was, she could not sleep, but kept ceaselessly on the prowl. This was fortunate for her, for had she gone to sleep, without any more shelter than the side of the house, she would never have wakened again. In her restlessness she wandered to the further side of the island, where, in a somewhat sheltered and sunny recess of the shore, facing the mainland, she found a patch of bare sand, free of ice-cakes and just uncovered by the tide. Opening upon this recess were the tiny entrances to several of the mouse-tunnels.

Close beside one of these holes in the snow, the cat crouched, quiveringly intent. For ten minutes or more she waited, never so much as twitching a whisker. At last a mouse thrust out its little pointed head. Not daring to give it time to change its mind or take alarm, she pounced. The mouse, glimpsing the doom ere it fell, doubled back upon itself in the narrow runway. Hardly realising what she did, in her desperation the cat plunged head and shoulders into the snow, reaching blindly after the vanished prize. By great good luck she clutched it and held it.

It was her first meal in four bitter days.

Now she had learned a lesson. Naturally clever, and her wits sharpened by her fierce necessities, she had grasped the idea that it was possible to follow her prey a little way into the snow. She had not before realised that the snow was so penetrable. She had quite obliterated the door of this particular runway, but she went on and crouched beside another. Here she had to wait a long time before an adventurous mouse came to peer out. But this time she showed that she had grasped her lesson effectively. It was straight at the side of the entrance that she pounced, where instinct told her that the body of the mouse would be. One outstretched paw thus cut off the quarry's retreat. Her tactics were completely successful, and as her head went plunging into the fluffy whiteness, she felt the prize between her paws.

Her hunger now fairly appeased, she found herself immensely excited over this new fashion of hunting. Often before had she waited at mouse-holes, but never had she found it possible to break down the walls and invade the holes themselves. It was a thrilling idea. As she crept toward another hole, a mouse scurried swiftly up the sand and darted into it. The cat, too late to catch him before he disappeared, tried to follow him. Scratching clumsily but hopefully, she succeeded in penetrating the full length of her body into the snow. Of course she found no sign of the fugitive, which was by this time racing in safety down some dim transverse tunnel. Her eyes, mouth, whiskers, and fur full of the powdery white particles, she backed out, much disappointed. But in that moment she had realised that it was much warmer in there beneath the snow than out in the stinging air. It was a second and vitally important lesson. And though she was probably unconscious of having learned it, she instinctively put the new lore into practice a little while later. Having succeeded in catching yet another mouse, for which her appetite made no immediate demand, she carried it back to the house and laid it down in tribute on the verandah steps, while she meowed and stared hopefully at the desolate snow-draped door. Getting no response, she carried the dead mouse down with her to the hollow



"She felt her homelessness keenly."

behind the drift, which had been caused by the bulging front of the bay-window on the end of the house. Here she curled herself up forlornly, thinking to have a wink of sleep.

But the still cold was too searching. She looked at the sloping wall of snow beside her, and cautiously thrust her paw into it. It was very soft and light; it seemed to offer practically no resistance. She pawed away in an awkward fashion till she had scooped out a sort of tiny cave. Gently she pushed herself into it, pressing back the snow on every side, till she had room to turn around. Then turn around she did several times, as dogs do in getting their beds arranged to their liking. In this process she not only packed down the snow beneath her, but she rounded out for herself a snug chamber with a comparatively narrow doorway. From this snowy retreat she gazed forth with a solemn air of possession, then went to sleep with a sense of comfort, of "homeyness," such as she had never before felt since the disappearance of her friends.

Having thus conquered her environment, and won herself the freedom of the winter wild, her life, though strenuous, was no longer one of any terrible hardship. With patience at the mouse-holes, she could catch enough to eat, and in her snowy den she slept warm and secure. In a little while, when a crust had formed over the surface, the mice took to coming out at night and holding revels on the snow. Then the owls, too, came back, and the cat, having tried to catch one, got sharply bitten and clawed before she realised the propriety of letting it go. After this experience she decided that owls, on the whole, were meant to be let alone. But, for all that, she found it fine hunting out there on the bleak, unfenced, white reaches of the snow.

Thus mistress of the situation, she found the winter slipping by without further serious trials. Only once, toward the end of January, did Fate send her a bad quarter of an hour. On the heels of a peculiarly bitter cold snap, a huge white owl from the Arctic barrens came one night to the island. The cat, taking observations from the corner of the verandah, caught sight of him. One look was enough to assure her that this was a very different kind of visitor from the brown marsh-owls. She slipped inconspicuously down into her burrow; and until the great white owl went away, some twenty-four hours later, she kept herself discreetly out of sight.

When spring came back to the island, with the nightly shrill chorus of fluting frogs in the shallow sedgy pools, and the young grass alive with nesting birds, the prisoner's life became almost luxurious in its easy abundance. But now she was once more homeless, since her snug den had vanished with the snow. This did not matter much to her, however, for the weather grew warmer and more tranquil day by day, and, moreover, she herself, in being forced back upon long latent instincts, had learned the heedless vagrancy of the wild. Nevertheless, with all her capacity for learning and adapting herself, she had not forgotten anything. So when, one day in June, a crowded boat came over from the mainland, and children's voices, clamouring across the grass-tops, broke the desolate silence of the island, the cat heard, and sprang up out of her sleep on the verandah steps. For one second she stood listening intently. Then, almost as a dog would have done, and as few of her supercilious tribe ever condescend to do, she went racing across to the landing-place, to be snatched up into the arms of four happy children at once, and to have her fine fur ruffled to a state which it would cost her an hour's assiduous toilet to put in order.

SIC ITUR AD ASTRA.

"A CUP of wine," the poet cried,
"Long cooled in old Falernian jars;
Rose-crowned to lie, and quaff, and sing:
'Tis thus one journeys to the stars."

"Two twining arms," the soldier begged,
"A maid of Venus tending Mars,
A loving wife, an infant's kiss:
'Tis thus one journeys to the stars."

"A day of fast," the pale priest spake,
"A shirt of hair, a back of scars,
Long vigil by the dying man:
'Tis thus one journeys to the stars."

G. FREDERIC TURNER.

A SALT SECRET.

By FLORA ANNIE STEEL.

"THE Huzoor is the Salt-of-the-earth," said Hoshyari Mull submissively. He had been educated, he asserted, at a mission school; thus the words of Scripture came handy to him. So also did a variety of other things.

"And you are the biggest scoundrel unhung! I know that, though I can't find you out—yet," retorted the Boy almost savagely. He was really a boy, a round-faced, fresh-coloured English boy, though his years numbered twenty-four; and he was a full-blown Salt Patrol on the Great Customs Hedge which, in the 'fifties and 'sixties, still stretched between the River Indus as it flows to the Arabian Sea, and the Mahanuddi River that finds its way to the Bay of Bengal—in other words, stretched for fifteen hundred miles across the vast continent of India. It was a strange, weird barrier, this vast hedge of cactus and thorny acacia, of prickly palms and still more prickly agaves, that thrust out their spiked swords boldly from a buckler of spine-set thicket. It was fully fourteen feet high, and of its width one could only guess in passing through the break, every ten miles or so, where some first-class road claimed a long passage-way through it. Here it was that the patrols had their bungalows, and it was at one of these that the Boy lived. It was a very important post, because it was, so to speak, the gateway between the south-west and the north-east—that is to say, between Bombay and the Central Provinces and Delhi, Oude, Bengal. Then, lying as it did right on the Rajputana Desert, with no other roadway within twenty miles of it on either side, it needed a sharp look-out all along the line to prevent isolated attempts at smuggling. But the Boy was quick at his work, and spent all his youthful energy in preserving the intactness of his Customs line. The life, however, was as strange and weird as was the barrier. It was absolute loneliness, absolute isolation. For long months together, not one word of your mother-tongue. With luck, a weekly post; no books, no newspapers, no civilisation of any kind. On the other hand, there was endless sport and unfailing interest for those who loved wild things. And the Boy had never been one for books. Harrow had left him, one may say, uncontaminated by them; examinations had passed him by; so, though both his grandfathers had been high Indian officials, he had drifted naturally into the Salt Department, the last refuge, not of the incompetent, but the unlearned.

There, to be a man was all that was asked of you. Without manhood the salt had lost its savour; there was no possibility of salting it with all the 'ologies in existence.

Hoshyari Mull paused in his deft winding-on of the Huzoor's puttees to say submissively: "The Salt-of-the-Earth speaks truth." Whereat the Boy laughed.

He and Hoshyari were at once friends and enemies. The latter was chief native supervisor, a man of about forty, above middle height, smooth-faced and lissom. There was nothing, the Boy soon found out, which he could not do—which, in fact, he did not do. An excellent accountant, he was also an excellent shot. If he knew, or said he knew, every smuggler of salt between Attock and Cuttack, he also knew every bird and beast and butterfly by name, and could tell you the habits of all and sundry. He knew the history of ancient India by heart, and could pour forth legend and tale by the yard. He was a magnificent swordsman, and could teach the Boy, who had learnt singlestick, many cuts and thrusts.

In short, he was all things to the Boy; without him, life in the patrol bungalow would indeed have lost its savour. And yet the Boy mistrusted him, for no reason except, vaguely, that he was too clever by half. Hoshyari, for his part, regarded the Boy as he had regarded no other master. He had been, as it were, *impresario* of amusements to several *huzoors* of the ordinary type. This one was different. This one was as the angels of God. That is how Hoshyari put it to himself, and, on the whole, it was a sufficiently comprehensive description, and

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led to thoroughly wholesome treatment. Here was no necessity for *'itr* of rose, no distilled waters of any description save the dew of Heaven, as it gathered on the *gram* fields where the black-buck lay, or hung like a diamond on a cactus flower over which some rare butterfly hovered.

But there was no dew this hot May dawn when Hoshyari Mull, with the deftness of an expert, was putting the woollen bandages on the Huzoor's long legs. It was not his work, but then, half the things he did were not that.

"I thought you were a Brahman, but I don't believe you are even a Hindu," the Boy had said scornfully to him one day when, foraging for breakfast in a village, Hoshyari had come back, triumphantly, with half a dozen eggs in his high-caste hand. Hoshyari had smiled. "I am a Srimâli Brahman, Huzoor," he had replied tolerantly. "The Maharajah of Jaipur salaams to me. There are none here in the wilderness able to say Hoshyari hath defiled himself."

So he made no ado about this putting on of puttees. They were, as he had proved to the Boy, the best of all protection against snake-bite. With them on, you might almost venture on trying to find a gap in the Great Salt Hedge; without them it was madness. For is not the prickly pear called in the vernacular *naga-pan*, or serpent shelter? And on these hot May mornings, as well as at noontide, were there not along the Customs line many pairs of watching, unwinking eyes lying in wait for the unwary, beside those of the fourteen thousand humans who patrolled its long length day and night?

Truly there were. As they cantered along it after passing through the gateway, many a faint rustle among the colocynth apples at its base told of death among the flowers. For the Hedge was at its blossom-time. Thorny, salmon-coloured capers began it, with here and there a yellow cactus bloom, or perhaps a rare red one on whose stems the wild cochineal insect lay like tiny spots of blood. Above it a wilderness of these same cactus flowers, big as a tea-cup, primrose within, the white stamens ranged sedately round the whiter star-pistil, yellow without, shading to purple. Above them the violet-scented puff-balls of the thorny mimosa, with every now and again a great lance of aloe blossom, brown and white, all set with flower bells.

And, over all, butterflies, dragon-flies, moths flitting in myriads.

"That is the gap, Huzoor, where the ill-begotten hound of a Poorbiah managed to smuggle in a back-load of salt last week. He was going to carry it all the way to Kâshi (Benares), he said. As the Salt-of-the-Earth will see, it is now thoroughly mended," remarked Hoshyari with a debonair smile of superiority.

The Boy frowned. There was too much, to his liking, of these petty discoveries. That long line of hedge had not been planted, was not kept up, to prevent the smuggling of a poor back-load of salt. He looked at Hoshyari with dissatisfaction on his face.

"When are we going to find something worth finding out?" he asked carelessly.

"If it be God's will, before long, Huzoor," was the reply, and there was a curious undertone of certainty about it. "Look, my lord! Yonder are the buck. They are on the move already; we must hasten."

They were off at a gallop, rifles crossed on the saddle bow, over the hard white *putt* ground that was interspersed by ribbed drifts of fine white sand. Hoshyari sat his horse like an Englishman. Indeed, the Boy, looking at him, used often to think that, barring his colour, he seemed of kindred race, as, in truth, he was, since the Srimâli Brahman is Aryan of the Aryans.

There was, in fact, only that vague distrust to keep them apart, and that always vanished before sport.

It was a hot day, and they followed the buck far. Then the Boy, having a sudden headache from the sun, paused, by Hoshyari's advice, at some wandering goatherd's thatch for a hearth-baked cake, a drink of milk, and a rest till noon should have passed.

A very hot day, and the Boy rested in the shade of a *jund* tree on a string bed and slept peacefully.

When he awoke, the shadows were lengthening, and Hoshyari, squatted on the ground beside him, had a new look on his face—a look of anxiety mingled with satisfaction.

"Huzoor," he said, "I have news for you! What I have always prophesied, what I have always told you would happen, if the Sirkar were not more careful, has come to pass. The native troops in Meerut have mutinied; they have gone to Delhi and murdered the Sahib *logue*. I rode back to the depôt, while the Salt-of-the-Earth slept, to see all was right, and—and I heard it at the gate."

"At the gate?" echoed the Boy, still

stupid with sleep. "Who brought the news? Has the post come in?"

Hoshyari's face was a study. He must break this thing gently to the Boy, who was a full-blown Salt Patrol, or he would see red, try to kill, and be killed.

And that must not be. Quite a pang at the very thought shot through heart and brain, making him realise that this Boy of an alien race had grown dear to him.

"The post had not come in, Salt-of-the-Earth," he said evasively. "Men brought it from the south."

"The south!" echoed the Boy again, with a relieved yawn. "Then it's a lie. How could they know, if we didn't?"

How? Hoshyari could have answered that question easily. He knew the strange, wordless rapidity with which news travels in India. In Delhi to-day, in Peshawur to-morrow!—a mystery that has passed undiscovered with the coming of telegraph and telephone, which do it for pennies and twopences! Yes, he knew, but his task was to prevent this angel of God from putting his life into the hands of men who at best were devils, as he was himself at bottom.

He knew that also. Most men with brains do.

"It is not a lie, Huzoor," he said simply. "These men are mutineers themselves. They are going to join those at Delhi, murdering all the Sahibs they can on the way."

He had laid his plan while the Salt-of-the-Earth slept, and watched the effect of his words upon the Boy narrowly, hoping that even the defence of a post might take second place before the duty of giving a warning; and that would mean being out of danger—for the time.

The Boy's face blanched. He had been away to the nearest station, fifty miles off, for a three days' holiday at Christmas, and the remembrance of a laughing girl with blue eyes came back to him now with a rush. Hoshyari saw his chance, and went on—

"The plans were laid for later on, Huzoor, so they are taken by surprise themselves; yet it gives them advantage also, since everywhere the Sahibs are taken by surprise also. If only they had been prepared, it might be different."

The cunning told. The Boy's face hardened into thought. Fifty miles on along the road. He might do it.

"When did they come in? I suppose they forced the guard?" he added, his voice almost breaking in its resentment.

"About noon, Huzoor," came the wily tones. "They were wearied out."

So much the better; they would not start, likely, till just before dawn next day. If he could give warning! He rose and looked round for his horse.

Hoshyari rose also. "The Salt-of-the-Earth cannot ride through the gate," he said—the time for dissuasion had come now. "He will only be killed in the attempt."

The Boy rounded on him instantly. "Didn't I always tell you you were the greatest scoundrel unhung? Now I've found you out, you skunk!"

"Has this slave not always said the Huzoor was as the Salt-of-the-Earth?" came the instant rapid reply. "My lord, listen! This is the hand of Fate. Wise men bow to it. You are here, safe, alone; none know of you. Come with this slave, and he will save you——"

"Hang you, you scoundrel!" shouted the Boy blindly, and fumbled for the stirrups.

"Huzoor, that is useless," came Hoshyari's voice, quiet now, all entreaty gone, in its place almost command. "You cannot force the barrier. Where we have one man, they have ten."

"I will try," muttered the Boy doggedly —"I can but try."

"The Huzoor can do better," said Hoshyari. "He can come with me. I know a way."

Even in his excitement the full meaning of this came home to the Boy.

"You know?" he echoed under his breath. "Didn't I always say you were the greatest scoundrel unhung?"

"And the Huzoor is the Salt-of-the-Earth," came the usual reply.

The rapid Indian dusk was falling as they made their way on foot to a village which, though almost exactly opposite the barrier, still lay the orthodox half-mile from the Hedge, within which, by rule of the Salt Department, no building might be erected.

The Boy was now in native dress, for Hoshyari had utilised the interval of time in arranging for the former's midnight ride of warning.

In reporting on these arrangements he had given scope to his imagination as to their difficulty. In reality, he had only to ride up to the barrier, give the password, and enter to be welcomed as one of the party within. Whether he was at heart one of them, or whether, all things considered, his cleverness had come to the conclusion that it was best

for his purpose to fall in with their mood for the time being, is uncertain ; but that purpose was clear—namely, to get the Boy out of the danger zone if he could. So he raised no objection to the looting of the Salt Patrol's bungalow—the little Salt Patrol who, doubtless, had run away into the jungle in the hope of escape, being but a mere boy—but the office must be let alone. There must be no tampering with books and registers, since he, Hoshyari Mull, Srimâli Brahman, whose father—God rest him !—had been Prime Minister to a Prince, was accountable for them to the powers that be, be they John Company or the *Badshah*. Therefore the doors must be locked and the keys given to him. And that Kattyawar mare in the stable was his ; so that was an end of it. Whoever laid hands on the beast would rue the deed. But all this was past. Now he had to get the Boy through the Hedge, incredible though the task seemed.

"The furthermost house in the village is mine, Huzoor," said Hoshyari gravely ; "it is thence that, in disguise, I penetrate the evil designs of the smugglers."

The Boy ground his teeth and was silent. He knew what he would say, but this was not the time to say it ; this was the time to warn his countrymen.

They found the tiny hamlet deserted ; as all know, half India fled before the mutineers.

"It is as well," remarked Hoshyari hardily, "since they might talk, though none know of the secret save this slave and Suchet Singh, the waiting-house keeper."

But as they came upon what was called the waiting-house, since here salt that arrived without proper papers, or that failed to pay the toll, was held up, they found Suchet Singh, the Sikh, lying dead at his post. The Boy ground his teeth again. So would he be lying but for his desire not only to die, but to do.

"Look sharp, will you," he said roughly to his companion ; "we lose time. The moon will be up ere long."

Hoshyari led the way across a yard—an ordinary village houseyard, with a row of three or four native corn granaries standing against one wall. These are huge basket-work erections, each taller than a man, in shape not unlike a big pickle-bottle, fixed to the ground and carefully plastered over with mud and cow dung.

"They are all full," said Hoshyari, with a curious smile as he passed one ; and, sure enough, as he lifted the little sliding door at the bottom, a long moraine of wheat fell forward in the half light. But the next instant, with a dexterous twist of his hand, the whole *kothi* slid round as on a pivot, disclosing a round, well-like hole in the ground.

"We shall need a light," said Hoshyari in a matter-of-fact tone, and produced a tinder box and a candle from a niche at his feet.

Once again the Boy ground his teeth. So this was the way, was it ? And all the time this biggest scoundrel that ever went unhung was discovering miserable back-loads of smuggling ! Words had failed him long since ; now thought failed him also. He plodded on, his head bent, down the narrow subterranean passage that scarcely showed in the flickering candle light.

But here, surely, there was less gloom and more room. He stood upright and glanced above him. A star showed clear through a tangle of branches.

"We are under the Great Hedge, Huzoor," said Hoshyari deferentially, in answer to his look. "The passage needed air, and we also required to have a store closer at hand."

He held up the light, and it fell faintly on rows and rows of sacks of salt ranged round a central space. "It is quite light here in the daytime, Huzoor," he went on cheerfully. "Sometimes the sun actually shines in ; and the snakes do not fall down now that we have put a net across the opening."

So this was one of the things concealed in the great width of the Hedge ! Who would have dreamt of it ? Who *could* have dreamt it ? Something of the comicality of the whole affair was beginning to filter into the Boy's brain. He caught himself wondering where the passage ended—under his bed, maybe !

It was almost as bad.

"We are there, Huzoor," said Hoshyari, mounting some steep steps, and then swinging a panel that blocked the passage backwards. It had shelves on it and books. He heard the turning of a key, he followed his leader, and the next minute stood, in the growing light which presages a rising moon, inside the office room, looking stupidly at what lay behind him—only a cupboard in the mud wall where the ledgers were kept.

Dazed as he was, he yet realised partly how it was done. The wall must be thicker than it seemed—twice, three times, perhaps four times as thick—but who would have dreamed ?

And for the rest ? He looked at Hoshyari defiantly ; the latter answered in words.

"It was quite easy, Huzoor," he replied lightly ; "we could always replace salt that was taken from the Government storehouse



"'It shall be there! And, mind you, it's to the death!'"

next door with salt from our storehouse yonder. And that paid nothing."

The Boy gave a little gasp. But there was no time for that sort of thing now. The Kattyawar mare was waiting, the moon would be up in ten minutes or so, and he must be beyond sight of the chattering devils he could hear outside before then. But, perhaps—yes!—perhaps he might be able to come back—to come back and give these fellows their deserts.

"I'll pay you out yet; you're the greatest scoundrel unhung," he said thickly, as Hoshyari held the stirrup for him.

"And the Huzoor is the Salt-of-the-Earth," came the urbane reply.

After that there was silence on the far side of the office for five minutes, for ten minutes. Then, faint and far, only to be heard of an anxious listener, came the sound of a horse's hoofs as it was let into its stride.

The Huzoor had got through the picket, and if he only remembered instructions, might be considered safe for those fifty miles across country. Hoshyari drew a breath of relief, shut the door and lay down placidly to sleep, feeling he had done his best. It is true he had sent the angel of God on a wild-goose chase; for, briefly, the mutineers had gone on straight that morning, only leaving a strong guard at the gate to keep it until a second body of rebels should come in next day.

So by this time, doubtless, the fate of every Englishman—aye, and every English-woman, too—on the route to Delhi must have been settled. But the ride would keep the Salt-of-the-Earth out of danger, since it prevented him from doing rash things, which otherwise he was sure to have done; for what was the use of losing one's life in fighting two to a hundred? Still less if it were only one. And these things were on the knees of the gods. No, there was no use, especially when the store of ammunition was in the hands of the enemy, and you had expended your pouchful on black-buck. The Huzoor was best away. With luck he would only find the cold ashes of outbreak. The hurricane of revolt would have spent itself; for, after all, it was only the soldiers who would mutiny. The rabble in the towns might follow suit, but there was safety yet in the country.

So he fell asleep.

When he woke it was broad daylight. Daylight? Why, it must be nigh on noon. He stepped through the door and looked through the panes. Aye, the sentry in the verandah was eating his bread. And the other detachment had come in; the court-yard was crowded with men. So much the better, for they would only rest during the heat of the day, and go on at sundown. Thus there would be peace before the Salt-of-the-Earth could possibly return—if he did return—but once away from his post he would most likely, and wisely, make for security to the north.

Meanwhile, it was time for him to be off. He had only to fetch a bag of gold from his own quarters. True, there was money in the office treasure-box; but that he felt belonged to whatever power might emerge victorious from the present conflict. For Hoshyari was no common thief; what he had gained, he had, in his own opinion, gained honestly by force of wit.

So he opened the further door, but, his face grown grey, fell back from it before a figure, dusty, travel-stained, haggard of feature, which pushed past him into the office and stumbled to a chair. It was the Boy. The dry, hot wind, the sandy deserts had almost choked him; he could scarcely speak. Then suddenly his voice came back to him, high, raucous—

"You knew! You knew all the time, you scoundrel! You knew it was too late! You knew they had all been murdered! But you didn't know your man. I've come back. I've come back, as I said I'd come."

"I saved the Huzoor's life," interrupted Hoshyari quietly, "and I'll save it again if he will not speak so loud. The sentry will hear, and then——"

"Let him hear! I'll have time to kill you first!" went on the Boy blindly. For all that, he lowered his voice; the instinct of belief in Hoshyari's wisdom was strong.

"The Huzoor would not have time," whispered the latter blandly. "I am no fool at wrestling, as he knows, and he knows also that I tried to save him."

There was a sudden, unexpected appeal in the tone which surprised even the man himself. He could have cried over this angel of God who refused to be saved.

The Boy looked at him with dry, hot eyes; there were no tears there—he had seen too many horrors for that. And he had ridden all night and all day, till the Kattyawar mare had dropped with him; then he had stumbled on as best he might, intent on revenge. And now the sight of Hoshyari was as the sight of a friend's face; it brought back the memory of so many jolly times they had had together. And what he said was true—the man had tried to save him.

He had to bolster up his anger. "It's—it's the other thing you've got to answer for, you—you—thief!"

Hoshyari's eyes gleamed. "Don't call me that again, Huzoor. I am no thief; I was only—cleverer than other folk."

"I'll call you it ten times over if I choose! Thief! Mean, miserable, petty thief!"

There was something more savage in the whispered quarrel than if the two had been shouting at each other, and Hoshyari's gasp of rage fell on absolute silence, as, breathing hard, they looked at each other.

Then the Boy passed his hand wearily

over his forehead. "No," he said, "I can't—you're right—I can't kill you like a dog! We must fight it out. There are foils—or swords somewhere—foils with the buttons off. Where are they?"

His dependence on the older man showed in his helplessness; he asked as a child might have asked.

There was almost a sob in his throat, but the voice which answered was firm.

"They are on the wall, Huzoor; but we cannot fight here, the sentry would hear and——"

"Hang the sentry!" said the Boy again helplessly. "What can we do?"

Hoshyari thought for a moment. "There is light enough in the storehouse under the Great Hedge——" he began.

The Boy leapt up, fire in his eyes. "By Heaven above, it shall be there—it shall be there! And, mind you, it's to the death, you cursed smuggler!"

"To the death, Salt-of-the-Earth." A minute later the false back to the record cupboard swung to its lock with a click, and the office was empty.

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The cactus flowers bloomed and faded; the violet-scented mimosa puff-balls fell in gold showers on the green lobes, the aloe bells withered in silence, the waiting, watching eyes waited and watched in vain. If the snakes, as they slid over that netting-covered hole in the thickness of the Great Salt Hedge, had looked down into the widening sunlit circle below them, what would they have seen?

Who knows, since Suchet Singh, the Sikh, lay dead at his post, the only man who knew the secret?

But somewhere amongst the ruins and the scattered copses which are all that remain of the Great Salt Hedge, a wide wall, crumbled to a mound of earth, may still show where Salt-of-the-Earth and the greatest scoundrel unhung went down to death together almost as friends.

DECEMBER WOODS.

THE woods are sprinkled with snow, and the holly's all ablaze,
And there's pearly mistletoe down the shadowy orchard ways;
The missel-thrush on the bough might sing, if he had a mind,
But he only lists to the sough of the wistful winter wind.

The woods are sprinkled with snow, and the pine's like a pretty maid
That holds, as she curtseys low, her skirts of green brocade;
She laughs as the Frost-King showers his pearls in her lap each night,
And she strings them like stars and flowers to wear in the morning light.

The woods are sprinkled with snow, and the woodman's heart is light
As he swings his axe to and fro o'er the logs for the Yule fire bright,
And he stays him a while to list to the sound of soft bells away
Where the ringers deep in the mist make ready for Christmas Day.

AUGUSTA HANCOCK.

THE REFUGE.

By A. E. W. MASON.

THE basket of *petits fours* had been removed; cigars and cigarettes had been passed round; one or two of the half-dozen people gathered about the small round table, rashly careless of a sleepless night, were drinking coffee with their liqueurs; the conversation was sprightly, at all events, if it was not witty, and laughter ran easily in ripples; the little supper-party, in a word, was at its gayest when Harry Caston suddenly pushed back his chair. Though the movement was abrupt, it was not conspicuous; it did not interrupt the light interchange of chaff and pleasantries for a moment. It was probably not noticed, and certainly not understood by more than one in that small company. The one, however, was a woman to whom Harry Caston's movements were a matter of much greater interest than he knew. Mrs. Wordingham was sitting next to him, and she remarked quietly—

"So you are not going on to the Mirlitons' dance, after all?"

Harry Caston turned to her in surprise.

"You're a witch," he replied. "I have only just made up my mind to go home instead."

"I know," said Mrs. Wordingham.

"Then you oughtn't to," retorted Harry Caston carelessly. Mrs. Wordingham flushed.

"I wish I didn't," she answered in a low, submissive voice. She was not naturally a submissive woman, and it was only in his ears that this particular note was sounded.

"I meant that you had no right to be able to estimate so accurately the hidden feelings of your brother-man," he answered awkwardly, and wrapping up his awkwardness in an elaborateness of words.

Harry Caston looked about the supper-room, with its walls of white and gold, its clusters of bright faces, its flash of silver, its running noise of merriment. His fingers twitched restlessly.

"Yes, I am going," he said. "I shall leave London to-morrow. I have a house."

"I know that, too—in the Isle of Wight."

"Not so very far, after all, is it?" he said.

"As far as Timbuctoo when you are there," replied Mrs. Wordingham. Her great dark eyes rested wistfully upon his face; she leaned the least little bit towards him. Harry Caston was silent for a moment. Then he turned to her with a smile of apology.

"You know me——"

"Oh, don't I!" she cried in a low voice. "We shall see you no more for—how many months?"

Harry Caston did not answer. His memories were busy with an afternoon of early summer in that same year, when, as his motor-car slid down a long straight slope into a village of red-brick cottages, he had seen, on the opposite incline, a row of tall stone-pines, and glowing beneath their shade the warm brown roof of a small and ancient house.

"Tell me about it," said Mrs. Wordingham, once more interpreting his silence.

"There was a bridge at the bottom of the hill—a bridge across the neck of a creek, with an old flour mill and a tiny wharf at one side of it. Inland of the bridge was a reach of quiet water running back towards the downs through woods and meadows. Already I seemed to have dropped from the crest of the hill into another century. Beyond the bridge the road curved upwards. I went up on my second speed between the hedge of a field which sloped down to the creek upon the one side, and a low brick wall topped by a bank of grass upon the other. The incline of the hill brought my head suddenly above the bank, and I looked straight across a smooth lawn broken by great trees on to the front of a house. And I stopped my car, believe me, almost with a gasp. There was no fence or hedge to impede my view. I had come at last across the perfect house, and I sat in the car and stared and stared at it, not at first with any conscious desire to possess it, but simply taken by the sheer beauty of the thing, just as one may gaze at a jewel."

The lights went suddenly out in the

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supper-room, as a gentle warning that time was up, and then were raised again. Harry Caston, however, seemed unaware of any change. He was at the moment neither of that party nor of that room.

"It was a small house of the E shape, raised upon a low parapet and clothed in ivy. The middle part, set back a few feet behind flowers, had big flat windows; the gabled ends had smaller ones and more of them. Oh, I can't describe to you what I saw! The house in detail? Yes. But that would not give you an idea of it. The woodwork of the windows was painted white, and, where they stood open to the sunlight and the air, they showed you deep embrasures of black oak within."

He stumbled on awkwardly, impelled to describe the house, yet aware that his description left all unsaid. The tiles of the roof were mellowed by centuries, so that shade ran into shade; and here they were almost purple, and there brown with a glint of gold. Two great chimney stacks stood high, not rising from the roof, but from the sides of the house, flanking it like sentinels, and over these, too, the ivy climbed.

But what had taken Caston by the throat was the glamour of repose on that old house. Birds flickered about the lawn, and though the windows stood open, and the grass was emerald green and smooth, no smoke rose from any of the chimney-tops.

"I ran on for a few yards," he went on, "until I saw a road which branched off to the right. I drove up it, and came to a gate with a notice that the house was to be sold. I went in, and at the back of the house, in a second queer little grass garden, screened by big trees upon three sides and a low red-brick wall upon the fourth, over which you could see the upper reach of the estuary and the woods on the further hill, I found a garrulous old gardener."

Mrs. Wordingham leaned forward.

"And what story had he to tell?"

"Oh, none!" answered Caston with a laugh. "There's no tragic or romantic history connected with the house. Of course, it's haunted — that goes without saying. There's hardly a bedroom window where the ivy does not tap upon the panes. But for history! Four old ladies took it for a summer, and remained in it for forty years. The last one of them died two years ago. That's all the history the gardener knew. But he showed me over the house, the quaintest place you ever dreamed of—a small stone-flagged hall, little staircases rising straight and enclosed in the walls, great polished oak beams, rooms larger than you would expect, and a great one on the first floor, occupying the middle of the house and looking out upon the grass garden at the back, and over the sunk road to the creek in front. Anyway"—and he broke off abruptly—"I bought the house, and I've furnished it, and now——"

"Now you are going to shut yourself up in it," said Mrs. Wordingham.

The lights were turned out now for the last time. The party sat almost in darkness. Caston turned towards his companion. He could just see the soft gleam of her dark eyes.

"For a little," he replied. "I have to, you know. I can't help it. I enjoy all this. I like running about London as much as any man; I—I am fond of my friends." The lady smiled with a little bitterness, and Caston went on: "But the time comes when everything suddenly jars on me — noise, company, everything — when I must get away with my books into some refuge of my own, when I must take my bath of solitude without anyone having a lien upon a single minute of my time. The need has come on me to-night. The house is ready—waiting. I shall go to-morrow."

Mrs. Wordingham glanced at him with a quick anxiety. There was a trifle of exasperation in his voice. He was suddenly on wires.

"Yes, you look tired," she said. The head waiter approached the table, and the party broke up and mounted the steps into the hall. Caston handed Mrs. Wordingham into her carriage.

"I shall see you when I come back?" said he, and Mrs. Wordingham answered with a well-assumed carelessness—

"I shall be in London in the autumn. Perhaps you will have some story to tell me of your old house. Has it a name?"

"Oh, yes—Hawk Hill," replied Caston. "But there's no story about that house," he repeated, and the carriage rolled away. Later on, however, he was inclined to doubt the accuracy of his statement, confidently though he had made it. And a little later still he became again aware of its truth.

Here, at all events, is what occurred. Harry Caston idled through his mornings over his books, sailed his sloop down the creek and out past the black booms into the Solent in the afternoon, and came back to a solitary dinner in the cool of the evening. Thus he passed a month. He was not at all

tired with his own company. The inevitable demand for comrades and a trifle of gaiety had not yet been whispered to his soul. The fret of his nerves ceased ; London sank away into the mists. Even the noise of the motor-horns in the hidden road beneath his lawn merely reminded him pleasantly that he was free of that whirlpool and of all with that later period that Caston linked it in his thoughts. Tudor times were stirring, and the recollection of them uncongenial to Caston's mood.

He had furnished the house to suit his mood, and the room which he chiefly favoured—a room at the back, with a great bay window thrown out upon the grass, and



"Harry Caston rose to his feet."

who whirled in it. If he needed conversation, there were the boatmen on the creek, with their interest in tides and shoals, or the homely politics of the village. But Caston needed very little. He drifted back, as it seemed to him, into the reposeful, lavender-scented life of a century and a half ago. For though the house was of the true E shape, and had its origin in Tudor times, it was the floor just a step below the level of the garden—had the very look of some old parlour where Mr. Hardcastle might have sipped his port, and Kate stitched at her samplers. Here he was sitting at ten o'clock in the evening, about a month after he had left London, when the first of the incidents occurred. It was nothing very startling in itself—merely the sound of some small thing

falling upon the boards of the floor and rolling into a corner—a crisp sharp sound, as though a pebble had dropped.

Caston looked up from his book, at the first hardly curious. But in a minute or so, it occurred to him that he was alone, and that he had dropped nothing. Moreover, the sound had travelled from the other side of the room. He was not as yet curious enough to rise from his chair, and a round satin-wood table impeded his view. But he looked about the room, and could see nothing from which an ornament could have dropped. He turned back to his book, but his attention wandered. Once or twice he looked sharply up, as though he expected to find another occupant in the room. Finally he rose, and, walking round the table, he saw what seemed to be a big glass bead sparkling in the lamp-light on the dark-stained boards in a corner of the room. He picked the object up, and found it to be not a large bead, but a small knob or handle of cut-glass. He knew now whence it had come.

Against the wall stood a small Louis Seize table in white and gold, which he remembered to have picked up at a sale, with some other furniture, at some old mansion, across the water, in the New Forest. He had paid no particular attention to the table, had never even troubled to look inside of it. It had the appearance of being a lady's secretaire or something of the kind. But there were three shallow drawers, one above the other, in the middle part of it—it was what is inelegantly called a kidney table—and these drawers were fitted with small glass knobs such as that which he held in his hand.

Caston went over to the table, and saw that one of the knobs was missing. He stooped to replace it, and at once stood erect again, with the knob in his hand and a puzzled expression upon his face. He had expected that the handles would fit on to projecting screws. But he found that they were set into brass rings, and firmly set. This one which he held seemed to have been wrenched out of its setting by some violent jerk. He tried the drawers, but they were locked. There were some papers and books spread upon the top. He removed them, and found upon the white polished lid a half-erased crest. It was plain that the centre part of the lid lifted up, but it was now locked down. Caston did not replace the books and papers. He returned to his chair. The servants probably had been curious. No doubt they had tried to open the drawers, and in the attempt had loosened one of the handles.

Caston was content with the explanation—for that night. But the next evening, at the same hour, the legs of the table rattled on the wooden floor. He sprang up from his seat. The table was shaking. He stepped quickly across to it, and then stopped with his heart leaping in his breast. The books and papers had not been replaced, and he had seen—it might be that his eyes had played him a trick, but he had *seen*—a small slim hand suddenly withdrawn from the lid of the table. The hand had been lying flat upon its palm—Caston had just time enough to see that—and it was the left hand.

"That's exactly the position," he said to himself, "in which one would place the left hand to hold the table steady while one tried to force the drawers open with one's right."

He stood without a movement, but the hand did not appear again; and then he found himself saying in a quiet voice of reassurance—

"Can I help at all?"

The sound of his own words stirred him abruptly to laughter. Common-sense re-asserted itself; his eyes had played him a trick. Too much tobacco, very likely, was the cause and origin of his romantic vision. But, none the less, he remained standing quite still, with his eyes fixed upon the table's polished lid, for some minutes; and when he went back at last to his chair, from time to time he glanced abruptly from his book, in the hope that he might once more detect the hand upon the table. But he was disappointed.

The next morning he saw the old gardener sweeping the leaves from the front lawn, and he at once and rather eagerly went out to him.

"I think you told me, Hayes, that this house is supposed to be haunted," he said, with a laugh at the supposition.

The gardener took off his hat and scratched his head reflectively.

"Well, they do say, sir, as it is. But I've never seen anything myself, nor can I rightly say that I've ever come across anyone who has. A pack o' nonsense, I call it."

"Very likely, Hayes," said Caston. "And what sort of a person is it who's supposed to walk?"

"An old man in grey stockings," replied the gardener. "That's what I've heard. But what he's supposed to be doing I don't know, sir, any more than I know why there

should be so much fuss about his wearing grey stockings. Live men do that, after all."

"To be sure," replied Caston. "You may count them by dozens on bicycles if you stand for an hour or two above the road here." And he went back to the house. It was quite clear that his visitant of last night, if there had been one, was not the native spectre of this small old manor-house.

"The slim white hand I saw," Caston argued, "belonged to no old man in grey stockings or out of them. It was the hand of a quite young woman. But if she doesn't belong to the house, if she isn't one of the fixtures to be taken on by the incoming tenant —if, in a word, she's a trespasser—how in the world did she find her way here?"

Caston suddenly saw an answer to the question—a queer and a rather attractive answer, especially to a man who had fed for a month on solitude and had grown liable to fancies. He had all through this lonely month been gradually washing from his body and his mind the dust of his own times. He had sought to reproduce the quiet of an older age, and in the seeking had perhaps done more than reproduce. That was his thought. He had, perhaps, by ever so little, penetrated the dark veil which hides from men all days but their own—just enough, say, to catch a glimpse of a hand. He himself was becoming more and more harmonious with his house; the cries of the outer world hardly reached his ears in that little parlour which opened on to the hidden garden. It seemed to him that other times, through some thinning out of the thick curtain of his senses, were becoming actual and real just to him.

"The first month passed," he said to himself. "I was undisturbed; no sign was made. I was still too near to what I had left behind—London and the rest of it. But now I pass more and more over the threshold into that other century. First of all, I was only aware of a movement, a presence; then I was able to see—nothing much, it is true—only a small hand. But to-night I may see her to whom the hand belongs. In a week I may be admitted into her company."

Thus he argued, pretending to himself the while that he was merely playing with his fancy, pursuing it like a ball in a game, and ready to let it fall and lie the moment that he was tired. But the sudden hum of a motor-car upon his drive, and a joyous outcry of voices, soon dispelled the pretence. A party of his friends invaded him, clamouring for luncheon, and in his mind there sprang up a fear so strong that it surprised him. They would thicken the thinning curtain between himself and her whose hand had lain upon the table. They would drag him back into his own century. The whole process of isolation would have to begin again. The talk at luncheon was all of regattas and the tonnage of yachts. Caston sat at the table with his fear increasing. His visitors were friends he would have welcomed five weeks ago, and he would have gaily taken his part in their light talk. Now it was every moment on his lips to cry out—

"Hold your tongues and go!"

They went off at three o'clock, and a lady of the party wisely nodded a dainty head at him as he stood upon the steps, and remarked—

"You hated us visiting you, Mr. Caston. You have someone in that house—someone you won't show to us."

Caston coloured to the roots of his hair.

The lady laughed. "There—I knew I was right! Let me guess who it can be."

Caston raised his voice in a quick protest.

"No, there is no one." He tried to laugh easily. "That's my trouble. There is no one, I am afraid."

They had driven his visitor away, without a doubt; and though he sat very still in his arm-chair that night, careful as a hunter by no abrupt movement to scare away his quarry, he sat undisturbed. He waited until the light was grey and the birds singing upon the lawn. He went to bed disappointed as a lover whose mistress had failed to keep a tryst.

On the next day he searched for and found the catalogue of the sale at which he had bought the table. The sale had been held at a house called Bylanes, some five miles from the Beaulieu river, and the furniture was advertised as the property of Geoffrey Trimingham, Esq., deceased, and sold by his young widow. Caston's memory was quickened by these meagre details. He recollected stories which he had heard during the three days of the sale. The Trimingham were a branch of the old Norfolk family of that name, and had settled in the New Forest so far back as the reign of the first George. Geoffrey Trimingham, however, had delayed marriage until well sped in years, and then had committed the common fault of marrying a young woman, who, with no children and no traditions to detain her in a neighbourhood which she considered gloomy, had sold off house and furniture—lock, stock, and barrel—so that

she might retire to what she considered the more elegant neighbourhood of Blandford Square.

This was all very well, but it did not bring Harry Caston very much nearer to the identification of his visitor. She was a Trimingham, probably, but even that was by no means certain ; and to what generation of Triminghams she belonged, he knew no more than he knew her Christian name. He searched the house for the keys of the table, but nowhere could he find them. He had never opened the drawers, he had never raised the lid. It seemed to him that he must have bought the table without the keys at all.

He might have broken it open, of course, and from time to time, as the evenings passed in an expectation which was not fulfilled, he was tempted to take a chisel in his hand and set to work. But he resisted. The table was not his. It was *hers*, and in her presence alone it must be opened.

Thus Caston passed a week, and then one evening there fell a shadow across the open page of his book. He looked swiftly up. He saw nothing but the empty room, and the flame of the lamp burned bright and steady. She was here, then, and as the conviction grew within him to a veritable exultation, he was aware of rustling of a woman's gown. The sound came from behind him. He turned with a leap of his heart, and saw her—saw her from the crown of her small head, with its thick brown hair, to the hem of her dress—not a shadow, not a vague shape dimly to be apprehended, but as actual as flesh and blood could be. She was dressed in a gown of pale blue satin of an ancient mode, and was slender as a child. Her face, too, was the face of one little more than a child, though pain and trouble had ravaged it.

She stood as though she had just stepped from the garden on to the window-seat, and so to the floor, and in her dark eyes there was a look of the direst urgency. She moved swiftly across the room to the table, pulled at the glass handles, and sought to lift the lid, and all in a feverish haste, with her young and troubled face twitching as though she were at pains to check her tears. Caston watched her eagerly. He noticed that once more her left hand was pressed flat upon the lid, as she tried to open the drawers, and then a flash of gold caught and held his eyes. Young though she was, she wore a wedding-ring. He had barely noticed it, when she turned from the table and came straight towards him. Caston rose from his chair. He heard himself saying once more—

"Can I help ?"

But this time he did not laugh upon the words. She stood before him with so pitiful an appeal, her hands clutched together in front of her, her face convulsed. He spoke with the deference due to those who have greatly suffered. Then came to him a whisper in reply, so low that he barely heard it—so low that perhaps he only imagined it.

"Yes."

Caston went across to the table, and, opening his knife, inserted it under the lid. The girl stood at his side, a gleam of hope in her eyes. Caston ran the blade of the knife along to the lock and turned it, prising up the lid. There was a sound of the splitting of wood, and the lock gave. Caston lifted the lid. It rose on hinges, and had upon the under-side a bevelled mirror, and it disclosed, when open, a fixed tray lined with blue velvet. The tray was empty.

But now that the lid was raised in the centre of the table, the side-pieces could be opened too. The girl opened the one at her hand. Caston saw a well, lined, like the rest, with velvet, and filled with the knick-knacks and belongings of a girl. She took them out hurriedly, heaping them together on the tray—a walnut-wood housewife shaped and shut like a large card-case, with scissors, thimble, needle-case, tiny penknife, all complete—for she opened it, as she opened everything in the haste and urgency of her search—a large needle-case of ivory, a walnut-wood egg, which unscrewed and showed within a reel with silk still wound upon it, and a little oval box with a label on the top of it, and the royal arms. Caston read the label—

STRINGER'S CANDY.
PREPARED AND SOLD ONLY
BY THE PROPRIETOR,
R. STRINGER,
DRUGGIST TO THE KING.

The top fell from the little box, and a shower of shells rattled out of it. Bags of beads followed, wash-leather bags carefully tied up, and some of them filled with the minutest of beads. It made Caston's eyes ache to think of anyone stringing them together. In the end the well was emptied, and, with a gesture of despair, the girl slipped round to the other side of Caston. She turned back the flap upon this side.

On the other side were the implements of work ; here was the finished product. She lifted out two small antimacassars, completely

made up of tiny beads in crystal and turquoise colours, and worked in the most intricate patterns. They were extraordinarily heavy, and must have taken months in the making. Under these were still more beads, in boxes and in bags and coiled in long strings. She heaped them out upon the tray, and looked into the well. Her face flashed into relief. She thrust her hands in ; she drew out from the very bottom a faded bundle of letters. She clasped them for a moment close against her heart, then very swiftly, as though she feared to be stopped, she took them over to the fireplace.

A fire was burning in the grate, for the night was chilly. She dropped the bundle into the flames, and stood there while it was consumed. Caston saw the glare of the flames behind the paper light up here and there a word or a phrase, and then the edges curled over and the sparks ran across the sheets, and the letters changed to white ashes and black flakes. When all was done, she sighed and turned to Caston with a wistful smile of thanks. She moved back to the table, and with a queer orderliness which seemed somehow in keeping with her looks and manner, she replaced the beads, the little boxes, and the paraphernalia of her work carefully in the wells, and shut the table up. She turned again to Caston at the end. Just for a second she stood before him, her face not happy, but cleared of its trouble, and with a smile upon her lips. She stood, surely a living being. Caston advanced to her. "You will stay now!" he cried, and she was gone.

This is the story as Harry Caston told it to Mrs. Wordingham when he returned to London in the autumn. She ridiculed it gently and with a trifle of anxiety, believing that solitude had bred delusions.

"Thank you," said Harry Caston grimly, and sitting up very erect. Mrs. Wordingham changed her note.

"It's the most wonderful thing to have happened to you," she said. "I should have been frightened out of my life. And you weren't?"

Harry Caston's face hardly relaxed.

"You don't believe a word of it," he asserted sternly.

"Of course I do," she replied soothingly, "and I quite see that, with us nowhere near you, all your senses became refined, and you penetrated behind the curtain. Yes, I see all that, Harry. But she might, perhaps, have told you a little more, mightn't she? As a story, it almost sounds unfinished."

Harry Caston rose to his feet.

"I tell you what you are doing," he said, standing over her—"you are getting a little of your own back."

"But such a very little, Harry," murmured Mrs. Wordingham ; and Harry Caston flung out of the room.

He did not refer to the subject again for some little while. But in the month of December, on one foggy afternoon, he arrived with a new book under his arm. He put it down on the floor beside his chair rather ostentatiously, as one inviting questions. Mrs. Wordingham was serenely unaware of the book.

"Where have you been, Harry?" she asked as she gave him a cup of tea.

"In Norfolk—shooting," he said.

"Many birds?"

"So few that we did not go out on the second day. We motored to a church instead—a very old church with a beautiful clerestory."

Mrs. Wordingham affected an intense interest.

"Old churches are wonderful," she said.

"You care no more about them than I do," said Harry Caston brutally. "I am not going to tell you about the church."

"Oh, aren't you?" said Mrs. Wordingham.

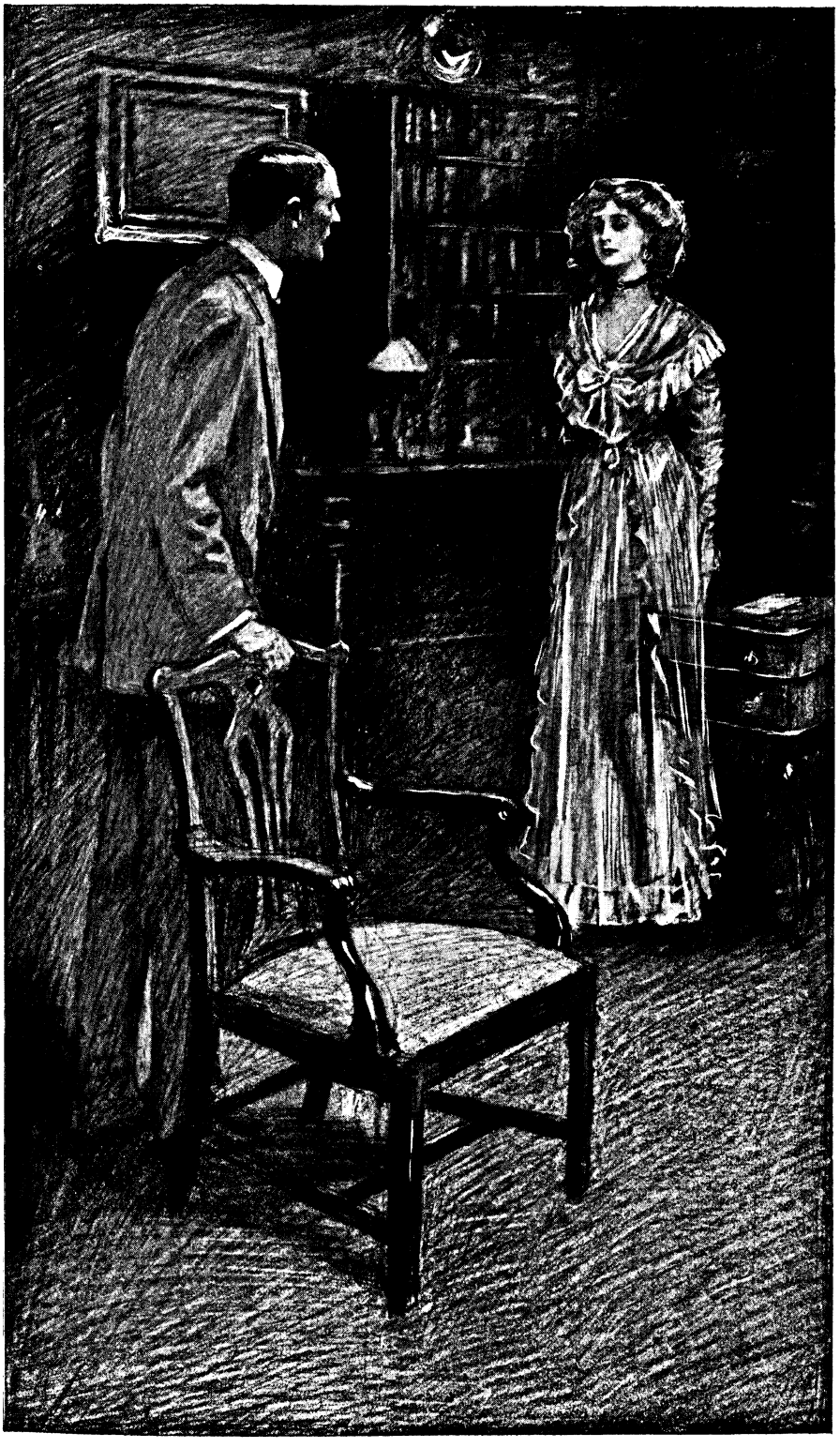
"No. What I am going to tell you is this. The vicar is a friend of my host, and happened to be in the church when we arrived. He showed us the building himself, and then, taking us into the vestry, got out the parish register. It dates back a good many years. Well, turning over the leaves, I noticed quite carelessly an entry made by the vicar in the year 1786. It was a note of a donation which he had made to the parish as a thanksgiving for his recovery from a severe operation which had been performed upon him in Norwich by a famous surgeon of the day named Twiddy."

"Yes?" said Mrs. Wordingham.

"That little entry occupied my mind much more than the church," continued Caston. "I wondered what the vicar must have felt as he travelled into Norwich in those days of no chloroform, no antiseptics, of sloughing wounds, and hospital fevers. Not much chance of *his* ever coming back again, eh? And then the revulsion when he did recover—the return home to Frimley-next-the-Sea alive and well! It must all have been pretty wonderful to the vicar in 1786, eh?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Wordingham submissively.

"I couldn't get him out of my head and



"'Can I help?'"

when I returned to London a couple of days ago, I saw in a bookseller's this book."

Caston picked the volume up from the floor.

"It seems that Twiddy was no end of a swell with his knife, so some one of his devoted descendants has had a life written of him, with all his letters included. He kept up an extensive correspondence, as people did in those days. He had a shrewd eye and a knack of telling a story. There's one here which I wish you to read if you will. No, not now—when I have gone. I have put a slip of paper in at the page. I think it will interest you."

Harry Caston went away. Mrs. Wordingham had her curtains closed and her lamps lit. She drew her chair up to the fire, and she opened "The Life and Letters of Mr. Edmund Twiddy, Surgeon, of Norwich," with a shrug of the shoulders and a little grimace of discontent. But the grimace soon left her face, and when her maid came with a warning that she had accepted an invitation for that night to dinner, she found her mistress with the book still open upon her knees, and her eyes staring with a look of wonder into the fire. For this is what she had read in "The Life and Letters of Mr. Edmund Twiddy."

"I have lately had a curious case under my charge, which has given me more trouble than I care to confess. For sentiment is no part of the equipment of a surgeon. It perplexed as well as troubled me, and some clue to the explanation was only afforded me yesterday. Three months ago my servant brought me word one evening that there was a lady very urgent to see me, of the name of Mrs. Braxfield. I replied that my work was done, and she must return at a more seasonable time. But while I was giving this message, the door was pushed open, and already she stood in front of me. She was a slip of a girl, very pretty to look at, and shrinking with alarm at her own audacity. Yet she held her ground.

"'Mrs. Braxfield,' I cried, 'you have no right to be married—you are much too young! Young girls hooked at your age ought to be put back.'

"'I am ill,' she said, and I nodded to the servant to leave us.

"'Very well,' I said. 'What's the matter?'

"'My throat,' said she.

"I looked at it. There was trouble, but the trouble was not so very serious, though I recognised that at some time treatment would be advisable.

"'There's no hurry at all about it,' I said, when my examination was concluded, 'but, on the whole, you are right to get it looked to soon.' I spoke roughly, for I shrank a little from having this tender bit of a girl under my knife. 'Where's your husband?'

"'He is in Spain,' she replied.

"'Oh, indeed!' said I with some surprise. 'Well, when he returns, we can talk about it.'

"Mrs. Braxfield shook her head.

"'No, I want it done now, while he's away,' she said, and nothing that I could say would shake her from her purpose. I fathered her, and bullied her, and lectured her, but she stood her ground. Her lips trembled; she was afraid of me, and still more desperately afraid of what waited for her. I could see her catch her breath and turn pale as she thought upon the ordeal. But the same sort of timid courage, which had made her push into my room before I could refuse to see her, sustained her now. I raised my hands at last in despair.

"'Very well,' I said. 'Give me your husband's address. I will send a letter to him, and if he consents, we will not wait for his return.'

"'No,' she insisted stubbornly, 'I do not want him to know anything about it. But if you will not attend me, no doubt someone else will.'

"That was my trouble. The throat, look at it how you will, is a ticklish affair. If she went away from me, Heaven knows into whose hands she might fall. She had some money and was well dressed. Some quack would have used his blundering knife. I could have shaken her for her obstinacy, and would have, if I had had a hope that I would shake it out of her. But she had screwed herself up to a pitch of determination almost unbelievable in her. I could make her cry; I could not make her draw back from her resolve. Nor, on the other hand, could I allow her to go out of my house and hand herself over to be butchered by any Tom, Dick, or Harry of a barber on the look-out for a fat fee. So I gave in.

"I got her a lodging in this town, and a woman to look after her, and I did what needed to be done with as little pain as might be.

"'You won't hurt me more than you can help,' she said in a sort of childish wail. And then she shut her eyes and bore it with an extraordinary fortitude; while, for my part, I never worked more neatly or

more quickly in my life, and in a few days she was quite comfortable again.

"But here she began to perplex me. For though the wound healed, and there was no fever, she did not mend. She lay from day

needs must be at times if our patients are to get well and do us credit. You are lying here surely with a great trouble on your mind. It shall be sacred to me, but I must know it if I am to cure you.'



"I sat by her side and wrestled with death for her."

to day in an increasing weakness, for which I could not account. I drew a chair up to her bed one morning and took my seat.

"'My dear,' I said, 'a good many of us are father-confessors as well as doctors. We

"The girl looked at me with a poor little smile.

"'No, there's nothing at all,' she said; and even while she spoke she lifted her head from the pillow, and a light dawned in her eyes.

"'Listen!' she said.

"I heard a step coming nearer and nearer along the pavement outside. As it grew louder, she raised herself upon her elbow, and when the footsteps ceased outside the door, her whole soul leapt into her face.

"'There will be a letter for me!' she cried, with a joyous clapping of her hands.

"The footsteps moved on and became fainter and more faint. The girl remained propped up, with her eyes fixed upon the door. But no one came.

"'It has been left in the hall,' she said, turning wistfully to me.

"'I will send it up if it is there,' said I.

"I went downstairs rather heavy at heart. Here was the reason why she did not mend. Here it was, and I saw no cure for it. There was no letter in the hall, nor did I expect to find one. I sent for the woman who waited upon her. 'Does she always expect a letter?'

"The woman nodded.

"'She knows the postman's step, sir, even when he is a long way off. She singles it out from all other sounds. If he stops at the door, I must run down upon the instant. But whether he stops or not, it is always the same thing—there is no letter for her.'

"I went upstairs again and into her room. The girl was lying upon her side, with her face pressed into the pillow, and crying. I patted her shoulder.

"'Come, Mrs. Braxfield, you must tell me what the trouble is, and we will put our heads together and discover a remedy.'

"But she drew away from me. 'There is nothing,' she repeated. 'I am weak—that is all.'

"I could get no more from her, and the next day I besought her to tell me where I might find her husband. But upon that point, too, she was silent. Then came a night, about a week later, when she fell into a delirium, and I sat by her side and wrestled with death for her. I fought hard with what resources I had, for there was no reason why she should die but the extreme weakness into which she had fallen.

"I sat by the bed, thinking that now at last I should learn the secret which ravaged her. But there was no coherency in what she said. She talked chiefly, I remember, of a work-table and of something hidden there which she must destroy. She was continually, in her delirium, searching its drawers, opening the lid and diving amongst her embroidery and beads, as though she could not die and let the thing be found.

"So till the grey of the morning, when she came out of her delirium, turned very wistfully to me with a feeble motion of her hands, and said—

"'You have been very good to me, doctor.'

"She lay thus for a few moments, and then she cried in a low sad voice: 'Oh, Arthur, Arthur!' And with that name upon her lips she died.

"She carried her secret with her, leaving me in the dark as to who she was and how I was to lay my hands upon one of her relations. I buried the poor girl here, and I advertised for her husband in *The London Newsletter*, and I made inquiries of our ambassador in Spain. A week ago Mr. Braxfield appeared at my house. He was a man of sixty years of age, and his Christian name was Robert.

"He gave me some few details about his marriage, and from them I am able to put together the rest of the story. Mr. Braxfield is a Spanish merchant of means, and the girl, a Trimingham of that branch of the family which moved a long while since into Hampshire, was, no doubt, pressed into marriage with him owing to the straitened position of her parents. Mr. Braxfield and his young wife took up their residence in Soho Square, in London, until, at the beginning of this year, business called him once more to Spain for some months.

"His wife thereupon elected to return to her home, and there Mr. Braxfield believed her to be, until chance threw one of my advertisements in his way. Her own parents, for their part, understood that she had returned to her house in Soho Square. To me, then, the story is clear. Having married without love, she had given her heart to someone, probably after her return to her own home—someone called Arthur. Whether he had treated her ill, I cannot say. But I take it that he had grown cold, and she had looked upon this trouble with her throat as her opportunity to hold him. The risk, the suffering—these things, one can imagine her believing, must make their appeal. She had pretended to return to London. She had travelled, instead, to Norwich, letting him and him alone know what she was about. The great experiment failed. She looked for some letter; no letter came. But had letters passed? Are these letters locked up amongst the embroidery and the beads in that work-table, I wonder? Let us hope that, if they are, they trouble her no longer."



"OH, MISTRESS MINE, WHERE ARE YOU ROAMING?" BY EDWIN A. ABBEY, R.A.

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SHAKESPEARE'S HEROINES:

SOME REFLECTIONS

By ELLEN TERRY.

DURING my long stage career I have often been asked how I think certain Shakespearian parts ought to be played. In other days, in younger days, I was too busy to answer. From morning to night I was at work, preparing for new productions at the Lyceum, and studying new parts—studying old ones, too, for, to a certain extent, one must accommodate one's acting to the different taste of different generations of playgoers, and with that object do a little "overhauling" from time to time.

Players must feel the pulse of the public. As long as they can still do that, they are never likely to become "old-fashioned," a nice word when applied to some things—to manners, for instance, or to furniture—but not at all complimentary when applied to acting. When once it is said we belong to the "old school," it is all up with us. We are no better than rusty nails hanging by the wall "in monumental mockery." In one sense I belong to the "old school." I was born in it, trained in it. Indeed, I am not sure that I have not seen more than one "old school" in my time! But just as I have tried to keep my *limbs* flexible—and, thank Heaven, have succeeded in doing so up to this year of grace!—so I have tried to keep my *ideas* flexible. The "old school" has always been to me more an invaluable training-ground than a reference-book of tradition.

Tradition! Who can say what stage tradition really is, and how far it is to be relied upon? How far is it wise to make an idol of it? The "tradition" as to the way certain parts should be acted is handed down to us in bits very often, and it is difficult to piece them together. Even when the whole "tradition" exists in a prompt-book, it may seem worthless in fifty years. I remember being told a story of Dion

Boucicault, the elder, which illustrates this point. He was, as is well known, a "producer" of extraordinary ability, as well as a writer of charming romantic plays, and when he was producing his plays, every little detail was considered by him. The stage-manager's version of Boucicault's directions was written down in the prompt-book and crystallised, as years went on, into the traditions of a Boucicault play. Now, it happened that when Boucicault was an old man, he was asked to superintend a revival of one of his plays—one he had not thought of for fifty



"MRS. SIDDONS, AS KATHARINE OF ARRAGON, AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE KEMBLE FAMILY—PHILIP, JOHN, AND CHARLES—IN THE SCENE OF TRIAL FOR DIVORCE IN 'HENRY VIII.'" BY C. HARLOW.

years—I rather think it was "The Peep o' Day."

"What do you mean by that? Why are you doing that?" said Boucicault at one of the earlier rehearsals. He was told that it had always been done, that it was "traditional," and the authority of the tradition was the prompt-book made during Boucicault's original production fifty years before.

"I can't remember a single thing about it," said Boucicault, "but I'm certain I never wanted any of this done."

He was shown the prompt-book, and could hardly believe it possible that it was all supposed to have originated with him. Yet for fifty years it had passed for the Boucicault "tradition," which no one could afford to disregard. Probably the prompter, in transferring Boucicault to the prompt-book, had misunderstood him, or, more probably still, had taken down the directions faithfully but mechanically. This unintelligent reporting of the original production of a play may be responsible for many curious and apparently meaningless "traditions."

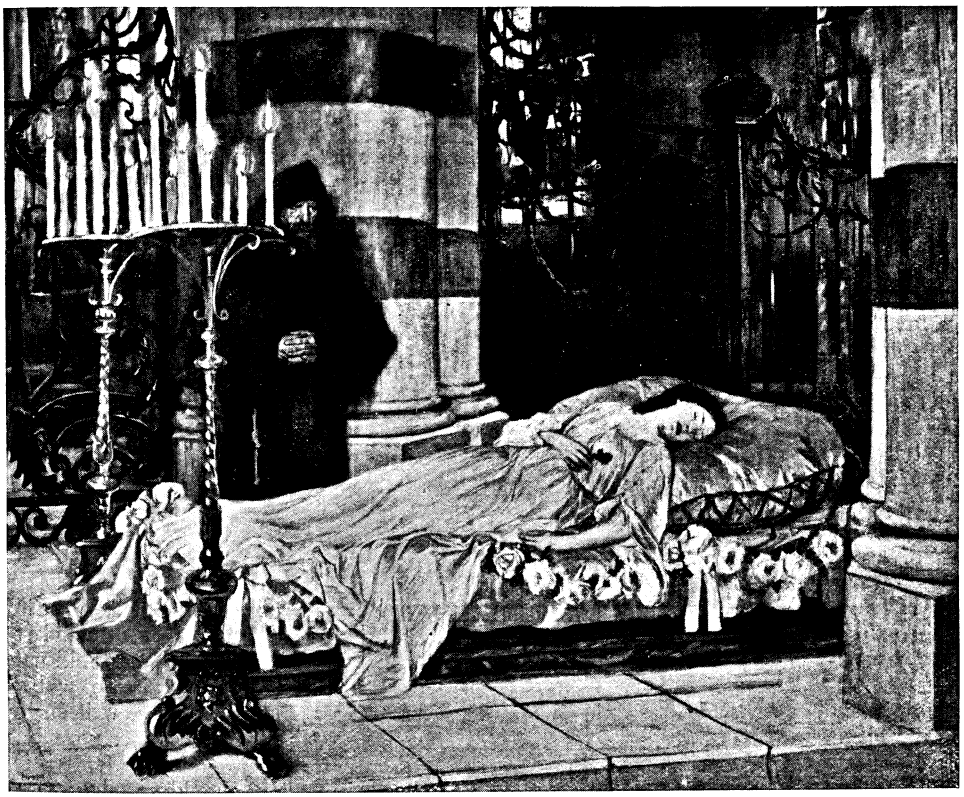
In any case, tradition must be sifted and selected. It is hopeless to swallow it with your eyes shut. I remember, when we were producing "Much Ado About Nothing" at the Lyceum, that Mr. Lacy, who, as a representative of the old school, was advising Henry Irving on certain points connected with his Shakespearian productions, told me of a tradition in the church scene which was so monstrous that I could not believe at first that he was serious. According to "tradition," Beatrice, when Benedick comes forward to assist the fainting Hero, "shoos" him away. "Jealousy, you see," explained

Mr. Lacy—"all women are jealous. She won't let him lay a finger on another woman . . . It gets a laugh," etc. I answered that not only was it impossible for *me* to do such a thing, but that it was so utterly opposed to Beatrice's character that it ought to be impossible for any actress playing Beatrice to do it.

It would be rash to argue from this that tradition is never any good. Take the case of a comedy of manners, such as "The School for Scandal." Such a comedy satirises the manners and customs of a period, and, if we had no stage traditions to guide us, the period itself having faded out of memory, half the play would go for nothing. I believe that the reason why an Elizabethan comedy of manners would seem deadly dull to a modern audience is that the "tradition" is altogether lost.

Traditional positions in a scene are nearly always valuable, perhaps because they teach us how little variety is possible in such matters. The building varies, but the scaffolding is the same. I once had in my possession a delicate little pencil sketch of Mrs. Siddons as Lady Macbeth, given me by that member of the family whom we used to call "young Kemble," who became in time old Kemble, and is now dead. It was well drawn—done by some contemporary—and represented the sleep-walking scene. There were the doctor and the gentlewoman in exactly the same positions as I have always seen them at the present time, and there was Mrs. Siddons apparently making her exit in the whirlwind style. The Siddons tradition in the part of Lady Macbeth is stamped on the popular mind in a way that is a splendid tribute to the great artist's powers, but to the actress, examining the tradition technically, the figure of Mrs. Siddons's Lady Macbeth is by no means so clear.

That whirlwind exit—I have wondered and wondered about it; it is certainly not



"JULIET IN THE TOMB." BY P. MONJE.

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the key to her treatment of the whole scene.

There was alive until quite recently a Mr. A., who used to tell a story of a coffee-house in the City which his father frequented. Another regular customer was a very old man, still very handsome, and very deaf.

"That's old John Philip Kemble," the waiters used to tell the other customers. "No one dare speak to him. He loses his temper when he don't hear, and he don't, because he's so deaf."

However, Mr. A.'s father, who was very enthusiastic about the theatre, kept on watching for an opportunity of getting into conversation with that cross, splendid-looking old man, and once, after handing him the mustard, or picking up his table napkin, was rewarded by a "Thank 'ee." This encouraged Mr. A. to shout—he had to shout it—"Could you tell me anything about your sister Sarah?"

"Eh—what?"

The question having been repeated several times, John Philip answered—

"Sarah? Oh, Sarah! You're quite right. She *was* a good actress."

This was baffling for the earnest inquirer. However, he persevered.

"What was her method in the sleep-walking scene?"

"Oh, Sarah didn't cut out the sleep-walking scene—oh, dear, no!"

"What was her method in the scene?" bellowed the earnest inquirer.

"*Method?* Sarah's method? Let me see. Sarah's method? Well, let me see"—rubbing his chin—"*she never moved!*"

Such answers may be disappointing to earnest inquirers, but they convey a great deal to an actor. Only what one would like to know is how my little pencil drawing of the stormy exit and that story of the motionless method can be reconciled. They can be reconciled, of course, but how did Sarah conduct the transition?

Her recorded memoranda on the part tell us nothing of that. Curiously enough, while they contain a great deal of penetrating criticism of incidents in the play, they present a picture of Lady Macbeth herself which seems totally at variance with the picture which the actress drew on the stage. I understand this very well. It is possible that in the notes I am going to make on Shakespeare's women in this article, I may express quite different views from those which I have expressed practically by my acting. "After the practice, the theory," but it is in the *practice* that players can give their best critical studies. Action, gesture, voice, are the actor's medium. When he takes up the pen, he becomes a literary critic of an inferior order. If I wanted to read about Hamlet, I would not go to a book written by an actor, but I doubt if in all the books to which I should go—books which great writers have contributed to the study of that wonderful character—I should find any criticism equal to that given by Henry Irving in his acting of the part. I *am quite sure* that I should not find any.



Photo by] [*A. Beau.*

KATE TERRY AS JULIET AWAKENING IN THE TOMB.

I do not believe, for one thing, that any scholar has such advantages as we have. They do not learn so much Shakespeare by heart, and that is the way to *penetrate* his meaning. They may have far more erudition, precisely as a man who studies religion scientifically has more erudition than a simple peasant saying an *Ave*. But which of the two, the professional theologian or the devout peasant, best knows what the *Ave* means?

In this connection I recall a conversation

I once had with Henry Irving on the subject. I was telling him of my Shakespearian studies. "When I was about seventeen, and very unhappy, I foreswore the society of men. Yet I was lonely, all the same—I wanted a sweetheart. Shakespeare became my sweetheart. I read everything there was to read about my beloved one. Between the ages of seventeen and twenty I lived with his plays. I am sure, by the way, that 'Titus Andronicus' is not by Shakespeare. What do you think?"

"I can't say," Henry answered calmly. "I have never read it."

I was much impressed by this simple admission, and contrasted it with the pretentious claims to know all about everything which some lesser men put forward.

"But," went on Henry, "I will guarantee that when I have read it, I shall know more about it than A. or B. or C."—mentioning some literary folk. "Do you notice that they read the plays, and read them, and read them, but never penetrate further? When I read a play, I see it, I live it. Reading! What sort of reading is it that makes anyone talk as S. talked last night about 'Macbeth'?"



Photo by] [*Window & Grove.*

ELLEN TERRY AS JULIET, WITH MRS. STIRLING AS THE NURSE.

This referred to a conversation in the course of which a Mr. S. had attacked Henry for his reading of "Macbeth." Henry, I remember, had listened patiently to the rather conventional reasons urged by Mr. S. to support his assertion that Henry was all wrong. Macbeth was a brutal, burly warrior, and so on. When Mr. S. stopped for want of breath, Henry said blandly—

"I say, S., have you ever *read* 'Macbeth'?"

People of the same type as S. often said, too, that Henry Irving's Hamlet was not Shakespeare's Hamlet. But what is Shakespeare's Hamlet? There are so many Hamlets hidden in the poet's written words, and surely Henry was more competent to interpret these words than his critics. Each actor shows us Shakespeare's lines under different conditions, and interprets them by a method special to himself.

And the more vivid the personality of the actor, the more he will reveal of the dramatist's treasure. "When Rubinstein played the Sonata Appassionata," wrote Oscar Wilde, "he gave his audience not merely Beethoven,

but also himself, and so gave Beethoven absolutely. It was Beethoven reinterpreted through a new and intense personality." When an actor of such personality plays Shakespeare, we ought to have the same experience; but, oddly enough, it is precisely such an actor who provokes the criticism: "This isn't Shakespeare." "*C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre.*"

I should like to know who have done more to make Shakespeare understood and loved than the *magnifique* ones of the earth? A few critics have complained that there was too little of Shakespeare and too much of the actor in their impersonations, but the world at large has understood that the actor's personality is itself an element in that revelation of Shakespeare's genius which the theatre at its best has afforded.



Photo by] [*Window & Grove*

ELLEN TERRY AS BEATRICE.

This praise of personality is beside the point. I was trying to say, when the question of personality distracted me, that an actor's best medium of criticism and explanation is *acting*.

At the time of writing this, I am just setting forth on a long lecture tour in the United States, and I am delighted to think that it will be possible, in a lecture, to work a little in my own medium. When I talk *about* Ophelia, or Juliet, or Lady Macbeth, I may convey very little, but if I quote their own words, action, gesture, voice will all help me to make them living women to my audiences.

I was discussing this lecture on Shakespeare's women with an American friend the other day, and asking him if he thought it would be interesting. "I know the subject is not exactly new," I said, "but I think it is the one in which I can best use myself, because all that I have learned about Shakespeare's heroines has become a part of me." I was a little ashamed of the egotism of this remark, but it is no good an actress denying that her art is *personal*. To my surprise, my friend's objection to my programme was that it was not egotistical enough.

"The most popular lecture you could give would be one on yourself!"

"On myself? What do you mean?"

"Autobiography is what the public wants," my friend answered. "Tell them about your life. They'll eat it. Egotism in life may do harm, but in lectures it ought to be as delightful as it is in memoirs. When people talk about other people, or write about them,

they are often dull, but when they talk about themselves, they are seldom uninteresting. If Pepys had not chattered about himself in his diary, who would care to read it nowadays?"

I quite saw the truth of this, but it seemed to me that, in dealing with Shakespeare's heroines in one of my lectures, I should of necessity be including a good deal of autobiography, for a great part of my life has been spent in the closest and most intimate association with them, and if you take them out of my life, you take one of the props that have sustained my life. You take twenty years of my career and wipe them out altogether.

Twenty years in such company could not fail to educate anyone, I assure you. You may gather that I have a great opinion of Shakespeare's women. I *have*. He brought the idea that women are human beings, with separate individualities—beings no less important, if different from men—to a point that no other writer before or since has ever reached.

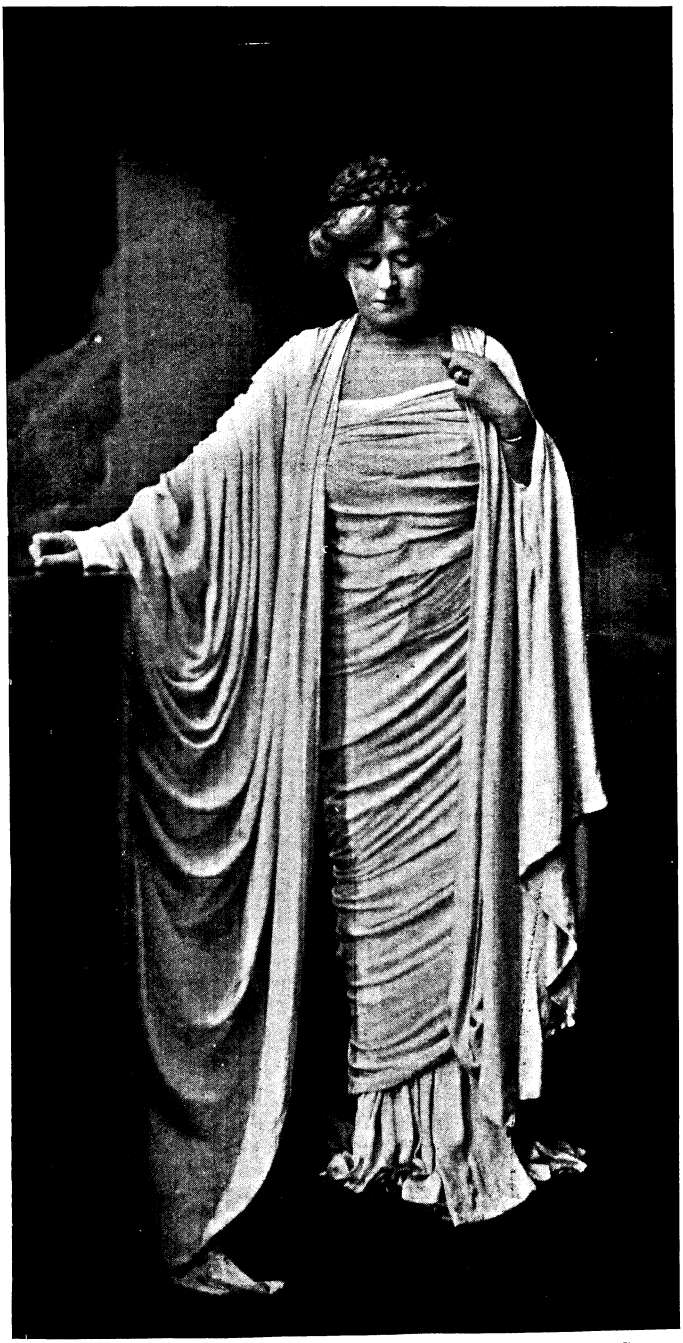


Photo by] [*Window & Grove.*

ELLEN TERRY AS HERMIONE.

Shakespeare has a fondness for drawing reflective, dreamy men.

He preferred the artist to the man of action, perhaps because the very masculine type, the straightforward man of few words and many deeds, is not, after all, of the highest interest to the dramatist; perhaps because, as Mr. Frank Harris has proved very ingeniously in "The Man Shakespeare," all his characters were, in a sense, but different revelations of his own individuality. Certainly we find the dreamer and philosopher in the murderer Macbeth, in Richard II. the king, in Romeo the lover, in Antony the soldier, in Arthur the child, in Jacques the courtier

and man of the world. By way of contrast, Shakespeare seems to have loved *resolute* women—gallant, high-spirited creatures ever ready for action, a hundred times more independent than the heroines created by writers in these later days. With the exception of George Meredith's women, all nineteenth-century heroines seem singularly "backward" and limited compared with Shakespeare's.

How far do Shakespeare's women conform to a certain well-bred, well-educated, independent type which was the direct product of the Renaissance woman's movement? That type is to be recognised, I think, in Beatrice, in Rosalind, in Portia, and in Juliet; but one must not strain the point too far, any more than one must wholly identify Cleopatra and Cressida with Mistress Fitton, Shakespeare's "dark lady," or Miranda and Perdita with his daughter Judith, any more than one must see his wife Anne in all the disagreeable and shrewish women of the earlier plays, and his noble mother, Mary Arden, in Volumnia. But as his early marriage with a provincial-bred woman older than himself may reasonably be supposed to have affected his ideas of women when he first came to London and wrote plays, as his passionate devotion to Mistress Fitton may at a later time have given him material for the creation of the *grande amoureuse* in Cleopatra, and the ignoble woman in Cressida, so some highly-educated, well-bred, noble-hearted woman—some true daughter of the Renaissance movement—may have suggested the creation of Beatrice and Portia. But none of Shakespeare's women are faithful copies of living models. Perhaps that is why they are as much alive now as they were in the sixteenth century. Perhaps that is why they need no special type of actress to interpret them. Every good actress is Juliet, is Lady Macbeth, is Rosalind, according to her imagination, and the best actresses are always right whatever their interpretations may be. Until recent years I had seen very few actresses in Shakespeare, and the fact that, when I did see them, it was generally in one scene at a *matinée* or in a last act, when I rushed away from my own theatre to theirs, makes it impossible for me to comment on and discuss their interpretations in detail. One



"OPHELIA." BY HENRIETTA RAE (MRS. ERNEST NORMAND).

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remarkable thing I have noticed, and that is that great acting is always in a sense the same, *and*—though this sounds a paradox, it is true—great actors and actresses never resemble one another in the slightest degree.

People have sometimes told me that if Mrs. Siddons could come back to us now, we should probably not be able to stand her—her acting wouldn't do in modern times, and so on. *Wouldn't it?* I say that if we could see her now, all that we shouldn't be able to stand would be the illumination of it. She would dazzle us with light.

Mrs. Siddons, according to her notes on the part, thought that Lady Macbeth was "fair, feminine, nay, perhaps even fragile." Yet on the stage—if those contemporaries who have left impressions of her performance are to be trusted—Mrs. Siddons presented a threatening and commanding figure, a woman imbued with "a turbulent and inhuman strength of spirit," an "exultant savage." Mrs. Siddons must have realised that her physical appearance alone—her nose, her raven hair, her eagle eyes, her commanding form—was against her portraying the Lady Macbeth of her imagination. It is no use an actress wasting her nervous energy on a battle with her personality. She must use it as an ally.

Yet I do not believe, all the same, that the Siddons Lady Macbeth was a "man in petticoats." Those who said so were imposing an eighteenth-century standard of femininity. Mrs. Siddons had to abandon the Lady Macbeth of delicate and sensitive spiritual structure and fragile physique, but I dare assert she gave them a womanly Lady Macbeth for all that.

There is not a line in this short part—short in words, but how long in opportunities for the actress!—that does not indicate that the "dearest partner" of Macbeth's ambition and crime is *a woman*, with the nervous force of a woman, the devotion of a woman, and, above all, the conscience of a woman. It is her tortured conscience which kills her in the end.



Photo by [*Window & Grove.*

ELLEN TERRY AS OPHELIA.

I saw the great Italian actress Ristori as Lady Macbeth, but, alas, my memories of it are most indistinct. She created a great impression on me, in particular, by her reception of Duncan. I can see her now, bowing, bowing, ceaselessly bowing, almost to the ground. It was very Italian and very good. She played the sleep-walking scene in a way that emphasised its ugly side. She was the somnambulist before everything, and her heavy breathing was rather upsetting in its realism. My ideas about the famous scene have completely changed since I played Lady Macbeth at the Lyceum more than twenty years ago. I know I struck no note of horror. Sarah Bernhardt I saw in just this one scene, and there was something strange, something aloof, something terrifying about her. It was as though she had come back from the dead. Oh, that I could remember *how* she got that effect!

I think it is very important for any actress who studies the part of Juliet to remember that although she is a girl, she is not an *ordinary* girl, still less an ordinary English girl. She has all the young Italian's mastery in dissimulation, and a nobility in loving which seems to have been one of the special

attributes of the women of the Italian Renaissance. There is a kind of gravity about her which makes her seem older than her years, and a courage which is conventionally supposed to be found oftener in men than in women. I don't remember to have seen any Juliet who was *great* enough—great in passion as in daring. My sister, Kate Terry, looked a little girl. I really was a little girl at the time, yet I can recall the sweetness and fragrance of her performance in the balcony scene—my worst scene, by the way. I saw Modjeska in the same scene, with Johnston Forbes Robertson as Romeo. She had the noble touch. Duse has it, too—a kind of simplicity, the straight thought straightly imagined and portrayed.

Then there was Adelaide Neilson's Juliet. I see a vision of loveliness—great velvety eyes, a pure white brow, a ridiculous dress, with a Victorian lace "berthe." I hear a soft, gentle voice, ruined by an artificial and pedantic diction. But where is the flaming soul of Juliet?

> Oh, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!

This is a beautiful creature. She may give us but a painted sorrow, yet what a lovely painting! Its beauty takes one's breath away, makes us love her, and forget that this is only the face of tragic passion, not its heart.

I would far rather see a young English actress tackle Viola than Juliet. I was impressed by this idea some years ago in America, when I saw Miss Julia Marlowe in this part. She conquered the audience with her *youth*. It was something quite new then for me to see a young girl rushing in—not at all like a fool—where experienced actresses, not always like angels, dare not tread. There was a sort of understanding in England, at least, that it was a lifetime before one knew enough of one's trade to venture on such parts as Viola, Juliet, Rosalind, Portia, etc. But Julia Marlowe knocked the superstition to bits. What was lost in some ways was gained in others. I felt this again many years later, when I saw Viola Tree make her first appearance as Viola, and once again, the other day, when my brother Fred's daughter, seventeen-year-old Phyllis Terry, surprised London by her exquisite performance at the Shakespeare Festival at His Majesty's. The child had hardly been on the stage a year, but she was almost the perfect Viola. Of course, in her case, inherited aptitude for the stage must, to a certain extent, have supplied the want of experience, but it was none the less an extraordinary contradiction of the theory that actresses cannot play Shakespeare's young heroines until they are too old to play them. Fred, who, a quarter of a century earlier, had been the twin brother Sebastian to *my* Viola, played it again with his young daughter. The likeness between them was extraordinary. It is as sure as anything can be in this world that my niece Phyllis has a great future. I do not think I have seen any young actress with such a heaven-born instinct for the stage.



Photo by [*Window & Grove.*

ELLEN TERRY AS PORTIA

Ada Rehan's Viola was more sophisticated. As a whole, I missed something which I learned later—that extreme youth can give better than the most accomplished art—but I shall never forget her delivery of the speech in which Viola answers Olivia's question as to what she would do if she loved.

> Make me a willow cabin at your gate,
> And call upon my soul within the house.
> Write loyal cantos of contemned love,
> And sing them loud even in the dead of night.
> Hallo your name to the reverberate hills,
> And make the babbling gossip of the air
> Cry out Olivia! Oh, you should not rest
> Between the elements of air and earth,
> But you should pity me!



"THE MADNESS OF OPHELIA." BY HANS MAKART.

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"OTHELLO AND DESDEMONA." BY LEOPOLD BARA.

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What wonderful things Ada Rehan did with her wonderful voice in that speech I defy any critic to convey, and all seemed governed by a most true and beautiful emotion. There was at times an unspeakably attractive bashfulness, a shy reticence, in Ada Rehan's comedy which I believe must be inherent in the Irishwoman, for I have noticed it in another Irish actress, Ellen O'Malley. It was fascinating in Ada Rehan's Viola, although, to my thinking, this was not her best Shakespearian performance. To see that, you had to see her Katharine in "The Taming of the Shrew."

Rosalind describes herself as "more than common tall." Shakespeare was fond of tall heroines, because Mary Fitton was tall, says Mr. Frank Harris, because the actresses in his day were young men, say others. She is vivid and witty in her speech, like Beatrice, enjoys rather racy jokes, like many of his heroines, but, for all her "cheekiness," she has a breeding which it is impossible to mistake.

Helen Faucit, afterwards Lady Martin, was a beautiful Rosalind. It is true that I saw her when she was no longer young, and she took the part at the pace that *kills*. It was all portentously *slow*—more like a lecture on the part than the part itself. And yet the grace of gesture and speaking, reflecting a yet greater grace of mind, the perfect adjustment of the means to the end, the certainty of everything, stamp this performance in my mind as the greatest I ever saw of a Shakespearian part.

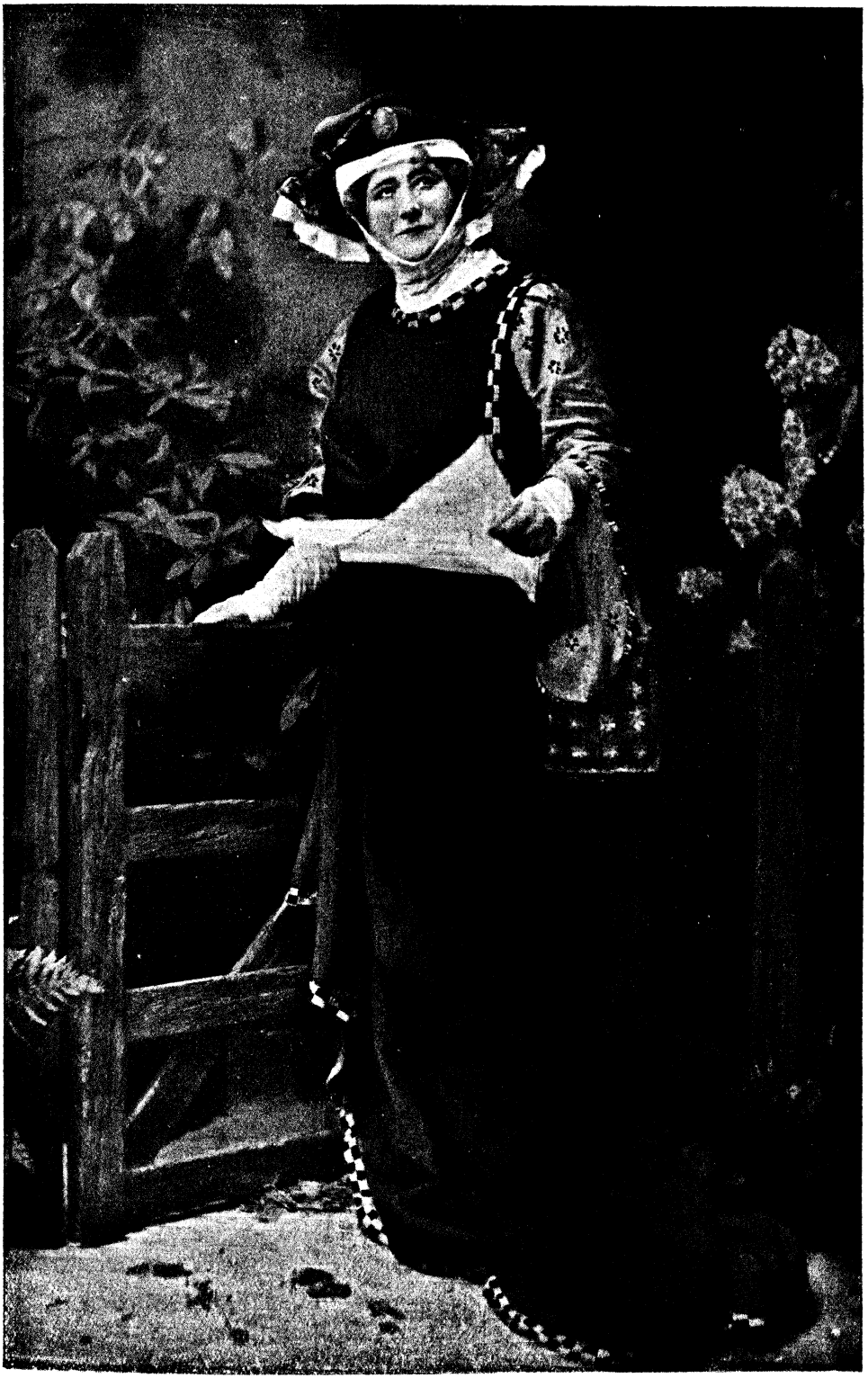
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I have often been asked about Mrs. Charles Kean's acting in Shakespeare, but as I only saw her when I was a small child, and when, moreover, I stood in great awe of her—hardly dared to look at her—any opinion I can express is inadequate, to say the least of it. Of her Constance in "King John," of which I ought to know something, as I was the Arthur of that production, I can remember very little, except that she never took her eye off me—at least, I never *found* it off me. She sobbed a great deal. Her Hermione was very dignified, in spite of the petticoats she wore under her classic draperies. My young heart was deeply moved by her sufferings, whereas, when she wept as Constance, I did not care a bit—a test of a kind. Her Queen Katharine in "Henry VIII."—well, she *could* play Katharine, I can tell you, even if she did not terrify the surveyor as much as Mrs. Siddons is reported to have done.



Photo by] [*Window & Grove.*

ELLEN TERRY AS VIOLA.



ELLEN TERRY AS MRS. PAGE.

From a hand-coloured version of the photograph by Messrs. Window & Grove.



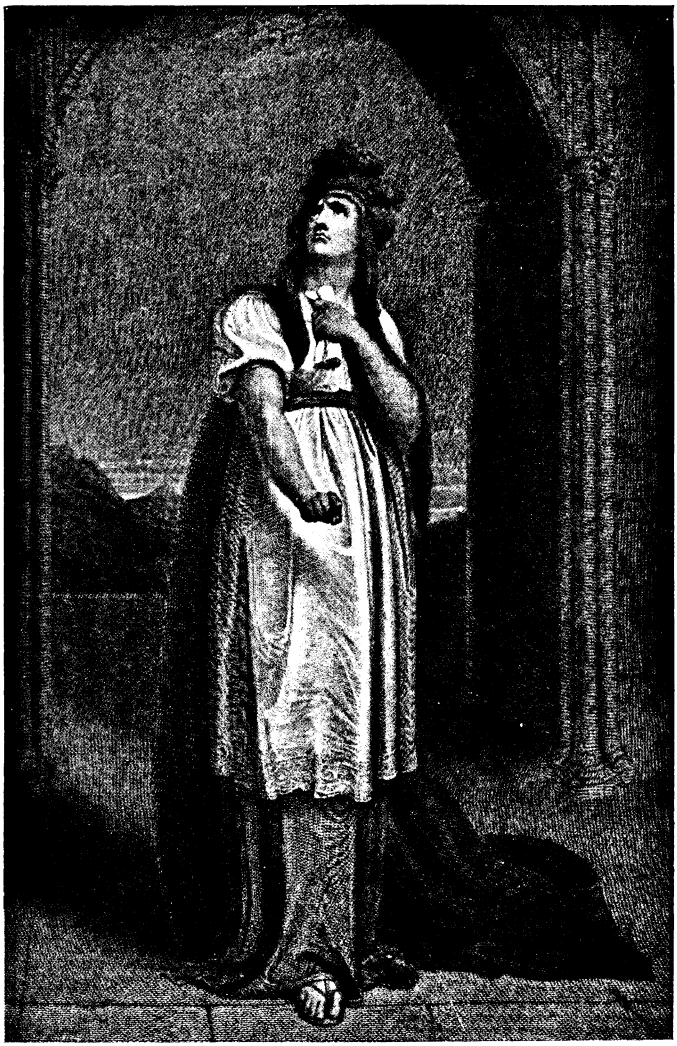
ELLEN TERRY AS LADY MACBETH.

From a hand-coloured version of the photograph by Messrs. Window & Grove.

One has to be familiar with the scene to appreciate the story. The Duke of Buckingham's surveyor is there, prepared to answer any questions put by the King and Wolsey. He knows that the more damaging his answers are to Buckingham, the more he will please them. Suddenly the woman, the Queen, on whom he has not counted at all,

> On the complaint of the tenants: take good heed
> You charge not in your spleen a noble person,
> And spoil your nobler soul: I say take heed,
> Yes, heartily beseech you.

The man who played the surveyor to Mrs. Siddons's Katharine trembled and shook to such a degree at rehearsal that the great actress had to ask him to control himself.



"LADY MACBETH WITH THE LETTER FROM HER HUSBAND ANNOUNCING THE PROPHECIES OF THE WEIRD SISTERS." BY RICHARD WESTALL, R.A.

whom he presumes, perhaps, to be indifferent, turns round at some particularly mendacious statement of his, and, fixing him with a penetrating look, exposes his want of disinterestedness in the matter—

> If I know you well,
> You were the Duke's surveyor, and lost your office

His answer was to run off the stage. They tried to bring him back. "I can't, I can't!" he replied. "I'd rather die!"

By this time it may easily be seen that my experience of actresses in Shakespearian parts is limited, and that what I have seen has never, not even in the case of Helen Faucit's

Rosalind, surpassed my *imagination* of how these parts might be played. With my own acting of them I have assuredly never been satisfied.

I was terrified, the first night I played Ophelia, at my complete failure to realise *scientifically* my ideas, and concluded I was a complete failure with the public. Afterwards I came to please myself in this particular part more than in any other, and found, to my surprise, that the public had been pleased all along.

A few nights in my life I have played Portia well. Beatrice I knew how to play, but I was never swift enough. Imogen, I think, was one of my best parts. I did good things now and again in Lady Macbeth, in Volumnia and Hermione, but whatever I did I could not live down the superstition that I was too "womanly" and "tender" for such parts.

I sometimes think people use these words without knowing what they mean, and talk as if strength means something disagreeable, and sweetness something weak.

I suppose my day as a Shakespearian actress is over, although there still remain a few parts, such as Constance, Queen Katharine, Mistress Page, and Hermione—parts any woman might act at any age—to say nothing of the nurse of Juliet, Emilia, Queen Gertrude, and others. It was in Shakespeare that I made my reputation, and in Shakespeare that I kept it. Happy the actress who is associated with Shakespeare, for she cannot play any of his parts without exerting imagination, without using every faculty. He suggests much, but often says little. He can never be literally translated. I do not know a single Shakespearian part that is *easy* to act. Happy the actress who is associated with Shakespeare, I say again, for she learns to think nobly of women, and, as if that were not enough reward, has her mortality clothed in the ample cloak of his immortality.

Two further articles by Miss Ellen Terry will appear in early numbers of THE WINDSOR MAGAZINE.

THE BALLOON.

STILL lit by fading afternoon,
Into the twilight far away,
An opal globe, a dim balloon,
Floats over London growing grey.

Observant and apart it dreams,
Frail and alone, toward the night,
And voiceless, noiseless, pathless gleams,
Till mists enmesh it out of sight.

A Saxon thegn the soul compared
To a night bird one moment winging
Athwart a hall where torches flared,
And wassail set the rafters ringing.

And I unto some artist's soul
Will my mysterious bird compare,
My vagrant to some darkling goal,
My ghostly egoist of air!

VICTOR PLARR.

FROM "THE PLUME OF FEATHERS."

By EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

I. MASTERMAN, MILLY, AND THE FROG.

"THE Plume of Feathers," or just "The Plume," as we most often call it, lies down to Widecombe, in Dartmoor. 'Tis a terrible ancient place, and a good few of us old chaps spend our evenings there. You might say we was better to home, but owing to a curious fatal accident in our families, we be wont to assemble ourselves at "The Plume." A most sad case, I'm sure, for five of us have outlived our wives, and be widow-men, while Samuel Bonus have kept single all his life, and Nat Bradley's lady, though alive—more's the pity—have lost the use of her thinking parts, and ban't no real comfort to him. But Nat wouldn't let her be took away. She bides at home with him, and makes daisy chains come the spring, and be twice a child, as you might say, though up seventy year old.

You couldn't call none of us malt-worms exactly, for, though addicted to beer and something better to top up with afore closing time, not a man amongst us but knows when to stop; and Gregory Snow is the only member as don't profit by that knowledge and act according. But—there, when Gregory's market merry, 'tis a sort of a bosky-eyed, affectionate state, that don't leave a shadow behind it; and to say that, when Greg's had too much, he's drunk, would be far too coarse a word. Nobody knows better than the innkeeper when anybody's got his whack, and never in twenty-five years have I seen him draw a half pint for man, woman, or mouse beyond right and reason. A steadfast and upright man is Johnny Rowland, and him and me, to say it without vanity, stand a thought higher in Widecombe than any of our neighbours, because we've been tried by fire and not found wanting. As a scholar, I give him best, but seeing as I've buried two wives, and had nine childer, and can number eight grandchilder at this moment—seeing, I say, my experience in that way, and that, against it, Johnny have nothing to show but a bachelor's life, you'll grant that my knowledge of things be greater than his, and takes the place of his rare cleverness of mind. But I'll frankly own that his heart is kinder than mine in some directions. Some things make me angered, and always will do so; but nothing or nobody ever saw him put about.

A round-faced man he was, with little twinkling eyes set in a load of fat. Very like a nice pig, to say it kindly; but for sense and patience and power to soothe trouble and help folk round a tight corner, there never was his equal in Widecombe. Everybody trusted him, and when you heard a harsh speech against him, 'twas safe to doubt the man or woman who made it.

I mind in the bar o' Christmas Eve us all got paying Johnny compliments, till he said—

"I wish I could blush, souls, for so many fine speeches I never heard to one time afore; but I be past it, and I'll only thank you, and explain that you do me far too much credit every way. 'Tis just a trick of my nature to keep my old friends, and go on making more."

"Us all want to," said Farmer Jim Mumford, "but how the plague can a man do it when it comes to suffering all the fools there be in Widecombe? 'Tis offering cheese-cakes to a bullock to be friendly with 'em."

Now, funnily enough, Farmer Jim was three parts a fool hisself—a stubborn, obstinate sort of a fool, with a mind and ideas about equal to what a jackass has.

"The thing is to find out the best in a man," said Johnny. "We be all fools when the wind's in one quarter or another. Us have all got our weak spots, and if us knowed our own so well as we know our neighbour's, we might be more witty to hide 'em. Did I ever tell you the tale of Milly Crowther and Masterman Reep?"

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He asked me the question, and, of course, I knew the story very well, because I knowed all his tales, and had heard 'em scores of dozens of times; but t'other chaps hadn't heard this one, and I begged John to tell it to 'em.

"It shows how Johnny here has the art to get round the fools as well as the wise," I said. "'Tis a very simple affair—so simple that you might think there wasn't nothing to it, till you weighed it up after. Because what Johnny does at the nick o' time be just they things that we common men always hit upon after the event. He's always ready to help a lame dog over a stile—ban't you, John? And you don't make no more fuss doing of it than a peat fire makes about hotting a kettle."

"Let's hear him, then, not you, Thomas," said Moses Butt, a silent old blid, as was seldom heard. He never did like me, owing to me being innkeeper's right hand and first friend. He was jealous because he was seventy-eight to my seventy-six, and thought them two years put him above me. Whereas in truth his intellects was built on a simple pattern, very much below mine, and if he'd been a hundred, he'd still have bided but a humble, harmless, silly creature without understanding.

Our pipes was drawing suent and our glasses was full, and it wanted an hour yet to closing time, when Johnny Rowland began his tale. And 'twas like all his tales—not so much what happed as the way he told it, his eyes twinkling, but his fat face solemn as a graven image all the while.

"A good few years back 'tis—afore I comed to 'The Plume,' in fact—and when I had a public-house up to Princetown. And my potman went by the name of Masterman Reep, and he got tokened to an orphan girl by the name of Milly Crowther. A straight up and down sort of maid was she, hard as a flint and flat as a pancake, with her scant hair done in a knot, her face brown, her eyes small and black, and her feet and hands terrible large. Stronger than many men she was, and revelled in man's work. None could build a wall better, and never weary and never laughing and never crying. Never known to give or take a joke, but a good church-goer, though rather cheerless in her views for a woman not turned twenty-five. 'Twould have been much like marrying a deal board, in my opinion; but Masterman was awful pleased with her, and played the lover to the best of his powers, and reckoned she'd make a very fine and useful wife. 'Useful she may be,' I said, 'but fine—no.' However, he offered for her and got her at the second time of asking. On the whole, she was lucky to find a market, for them as never laugh nor cry be like the bread and potatoes—little valued till lost. 'Tis the women that give the men the most unrestful time that they think the most about and always hanker after. The self-contained, steady sort, as never be up or down and be stable in their minds, and always the same, are sadly undervalued, in my opinion, though, of course, I speak as a green bachelor, who have only seen you married folk from outside the bars.

"Well, Masterman was a red chap, freckled and fearnought. A good worker, but he had his faults, and he'd sulk sometimes and fancy affronts without a cause. He was vain of his cleverness, though he hadn't enough to hurt hisself with. He'd been educated pretty thorough, and knew a good many things that weren't common knowledge for a potman thirty year ago. But he sniffed at our old-world larning, and laughed in his sleeve sometimes when I told him about the ancient charms and cures and such like. Yet 'twas just along of a bit of nonsense of that sort I was able to help the man, for you can often take a person's weakness and use it to help 'em, same as you can use it to harm 'em; and despite his laughter and his airs, he was as ready to try a charm as any when the time came.

"As for Milly, she worked like a pony for her uncle to Rundlestone Farm, and was no more thought of than a pump-handle, which be used every minute, yet never praised, but only cussed when it happens to attract attention by going wrong. The pair kept company for a matter of three year very steadfast, and Masterman hoped that, come his mother died, he'd be able to wed, and Milly was quite content to wait. Masterman, no doubt, gladdened up her life a lot, and gave it a great interest and made it worth living; but 'twas a grief to her as she never could bring him anything, being a poor relation of the farmer to Rundlestone, and took in for charity. Not that she didn't pay for her keep a hundred times over, and farmer he was always going to give her a present of money when times were better; but they never got better, so he never did.

"Then comed a great tragedy, and Milly and Masterman fell out—one of they muddled sort of rows where you can't get to the rights of it, and don't know who is most to blame. But without a doubt it was the man. The

girl had her pride, for the poorest be the proudest oft enough. Yes, she had her pride, and he'd trod on it and angered her cruel.

"Well, Masterman brought his trouble to me, and he had a long rigmarole how he bade Milly up and leave Rundlestone, and how she wouldn't, and how he'd said that if she was so mean-spirited as to bide there fetching nought, he'd drop her and seek another. And she'd said that the sooner he done so, the better for her peace of mind, if that was his opinion, and that she wasn't going to leave Rundlestone for his bidding or fifty such; and that 'twas the man's place to make the money, whether or no, and if he wasn't good for twenty shilling a week at thirty year old, Heaven help him. And so on, and so on.

"'Twas a proper rupture between 'em, and when chance threw me into the way of meeting Milly, after I'd heard Masterman's side, I axed her about it, and found 'twas right down serious. She wouldn't see him no more, and wouldn't speak to him no more. She declared it was a very pleasant thing being free again, and at liberty to talk to men and women when and where she pleased, because Masterman Reep, so she said, had been a jealous, silly mumphead, and had stood between her and other people more than was right or fair.

"'So soon expect honey from a beetle as patience from that man,' said Milly to me. 'Why, the silly rummage he tells! 'Tisn't only that I'm not to do this and not to do that, and not to see this man or talk to that woman; but now, if you please, I must leave Rundlestone and find a place where I can make money—for him to spend, come we're married, I suppose. And ban't my uncle going to give me a present of money some day, when the times are easier? And to name the name of money to me, that have never seen the colour of it, and to order me to earn it—'tis a very unmanly thing. So there 'tis. I'm eight-and-twenty, and know life, and know my duty to my uncle, and won't be dictated to; and if he thinks I want such a lot of teaching and ordering about, I don't. So we've parted. My mind's made up.'

"She wept then and showed me, of course, that her mind weren't made up at all.

"'Think twice,' I told her. 'Tis only a small mind be made up so quickly. Don't decide nothing, and don't let a passing anger turn you from Masterman. There's very fine qualities in him, and he'll have two shilling a week on his wages next quarter. And I'm perfectly sure, whatever his faults, he'd not willingly have hurt your pride, Milly Crowther. Belike he never knew you'd got any pride, for that matter."

"'Pride or no pride, 'tis all one to me now,' she said; 'and whether he gets two shilling or ten on his money, 'tis all the same to me. He wants me to be earning pennies for him, and he don't respect me no more because I cleave to Uncle Crowther, and I ban't going to marry a man as don't respect me. I'm so proud as him, and I've got just as much right to be. Thinks he's so clever that his larning would sink a ship! But he don't know how to treat a woman, least of all me.'

"The silly things went their way, but, of course, it had got to be a habit for 'em to love each other dearly, and you can't break a habit that's been three year in building up. Masterman moped and sulked and tried my patience more'n once; while I heard from Farmer Crowther to Rundlestone that his niece was in a poor way and right down on her luck, and not to be lifted up for love or money. More like a deal board than ever she growed, and, for my part, knowing less of human nature then than now, I couldn't see why Reep took on so bad about her. But there 'twas—she'd growed into his very heartstrings; he couldn't endure to think of any other pattern of woman, and when they fell apart, he began to know what it meant. 'Twasn't even as if her sort had been common, for she was just as rare in her hard, unyielding homeliness as the prettiest girls be rare in their beauty. He wanted her again cruel in a month, but was too stuck-up to humble hisself and take the first step back to her; and she wanted him just as bad, and was too modest, if not too proud, to say so. Then they lost their self-respect, of course, and folk laughed at them—naturally, because a sillier, sadder pair you couldn't have wished to see in the four corners of the kingdom; and 'tis a cruel thing about humans that they'll laugh at sadness so often as at silliness. There's a school-boy, monkey-like sort of stuff in us that will out; and we take a terrible lot of sneaking pleasure in seeing a fool's progress, so long as his foot don't fall on our own corns. We feel so wise and so high up and so much above the poor, erring wretch—just the same as we used to feel when our brothers and sisters got into a scrape, and we'd chanced—more by good luck than good management—to keep out of it. Virtue shone in our faces at such times.

"Presently, having given the matter a good

bit of thought, and feeling very sure the silly things was made each for t'other, I cast about how to bring 'em together again. I went to the man first, and was surprised to find his folly still held out. Point-blank Masterman refused to have any truck with the woman—unless she came to him first, on her marrow-bones—and that though I gave him a bit of news as to his wages that would have pleased her a good bit; while as for her, her uncle went at her with all his might, only to find out that she'd not take the first step, because she thought, under the circumstances, 'twould be a very unwomanly thing to do, and an act of cowardice in her. So there was the problem—to bring 'em together, willy nilly, as we say, to throw 'em together in such a way as they couldn't well part again without a return to sense and understanding.

"Reep was fierce about it. 'Her shan't come it over me,' he said. 'Never, never, please Heaven, will I speak to her again until she speaks to me!'

"'But it won't please Heaven, my dear man,' I told him. 'Twill vex Heaven something shocking, for Heaven's meant you to be one. 'Twas a marriage made in Heaven, if ever marriage was, and 'tis the man's part, as the stronger vessel, to take the fust step.' However he held out for six months, and I was busy and let the thing bide, feeling that I could do no more. Come Christmas I put half-a-crown on his wages, and let Milly know it, but neither would yield.

"Masterman's misery increased, however, and he threw up the sponge at last and came to me. He wanted to go back to her and get her to care for him again; but he'd heard a dark rumour as she was running down another man—a fine fellow that worked in Pethick's granite quarry—and had nearly got him.

"'Tis a case for a charm, without a doubt,' I told him, and he stared, for he never thought a man like him would have to face such a word as that in a serious spirit.

"'You glare,' I said to him, 'but I tell truth. There's lots of things that folk laugh at to-day that be powerful for good none the less, and my own grandfather was a white witch, and well I know he did more good than harm in the world. If you want Milly Crowther back, you've got to do a certain thing, and, just because it's terrible easy, no doubt you'll flout it, for that's the way of the world, and history's full of it. The trial to faith ban't in asking a man to swallow big things, but little ones. And if I told you what you ought to do to get this girl back, no doubt such a proud and sulky and silly creature as you would refuse.'

"'No, no, master, I'd do anything!' he said very earnestly. 'I'm in a cruel mizmaze of doubt and trouble, and I've larned patience of late, and be very much broken down. The chap from the quarry be a settler.'

"'So long as you do what I tell you, there's no call for you to fear one man or ten,' I answered. 'You go all alone to South Hessary Marsh, at twelve of the clock next Christmas Eve, and catch a frog there. I was up over for a nitch of reeds in the fall, and the frogs be wonderful plenty—gert yellow-and-black fellows. There's a pond by the shepherd's ruined hut there, and you must take a net and roke around in the bog, and just at the very moment when Christmas Day be come, you'll catch a fine frog. And you bring him to me without a word to a soul; and if anybody axes you what you be doing, you'll say "your master's bidding," and no more about it.'

"He stared, and I spoke again.

"'There's many things look hard till you've walked all round 'em. Who'd think my cure for kebbil in kine was like to heal them, and yet whoever knowed it to fail? You do what I say, but if 'tis too easy a thing, then don't you trouble me no more about your business, because I won't hear no more.'

"He was doubtful and suspicious, but promised to obey, as I knew he would do; and then, taking the trouble to meet Milly, by dropping into Rundlestone for a drink on my way back from Tavistock, I approached the subject of Reep, and found that there was no truth in the rumour of the quarryman at all. One of her friends had set it about to wake up Masterman. But Milly was just as much in love with him as ever, and she told me, under promise of secrecy, that she wanted him cruel, and didn't know how she was going to live her life long without him. In fact, she had almost made up her mind to sing small and speak next time she passed him by. And I gave her hope, and sent her off to Mother Brimblecombe—a woman that lived in that tumbledown cot by Merivale Bridge. She was a clever old creature, and passed for being too clever, just because her common-sense and quick wits gave her a pull over her neighbours. And Milly went to her, as I advised, and heard just what I'd told Mother Brimblecombe to tell her. In a word, she was to go up over to South Hessary Marsh o' Christmas Eve, and catch a frog in the first hour of Christmas Day, and bring it to the old woman.



"He held up his light and recognised her."

"'And what if she do bring it?' asked gammer of me.

"'Have no fear on that score,' I told her; 'she won't. Ban't the season for frogs to be about. She won't catch the frog, but I'm hopeful she'll catch my potman—or he'll catch her, for he's to be there on the same chase. In my opinion, all this headstrong pair o' fools do want is to be thrust upon each other in such a way as they must come together again; and that will happen in that lonesome place. They'll have all night to make it up.'

"'That is if Milly don't go into spasms at finding a man up there,' said the old woman; but I promised her there was no fear of any such thing.

"Of course, Mother Brimblecombe saw like lightning what my meaning was, being that sort of woman, and when Milly went to her presently, she heard what she was to do. And bravely she faced it, being a female with no more fear of the dark than a cow. 'Twas told her she must seek the frog at midnight at the appointed place, and Mother Brimblecombe bade her go well out upon the bog and fear nothing in the search.

"I heard how it went off after, and the man Reep came to me on Christmas morning grinning all over his freckled face, and wishing me the blessings of the season. 'Same to you, Masterman Reep, and where's your frog?' I axes him.

"'It have come right without the frog,' says he. 'A terrible queer matter altogether, and I'm all up for the ways of Providence evermore, because, though 'twas all stuff and nonsense about a frog being in the pool, and 'tis all rubbish about charms and the like, as I well know, yet the watching Providence used the chance—was there, watchful and ready, to bring me and my girl together again.'

"Then he went on to tell me he was up there at half after eleven with his lantern and net, and how he felt ashamed of himself to engage in such a thing, and how he was frighted out of his five senses by seeing what he thought was a Jacky-twoad flickering in the bog not twenty yard away from him. Then he heard a cruel shriek, and knowed 'twas a human. For all went merry as a marriage bell, you see, and if Milly, in her desire to catch the frog, didn't go and do just what Mother Brimblecombe and me had hoped she would do, and sink in the mire up above her knees just at the critical moment. And, of course, she thought the bog was going to suck her down, and gave tongue according. But Masterman comed to the rescue, and then, when he'd dragged the poor bog-foundered gawk ashore, he held up his light and recognised her. He accused her point-blank of trying to do away with her life; but she denied it, and turned on him and asked what the mischief he was up to there at such a time.

"Well, no need to say how it all went after that. They was in church on Christmas Day, hollering out the hymns from the same book afore the nation, and the few as cared twopence about 'em felt very pleased the poor creatures had come together again.

"Just one of them little plots that went exceeding well, and nobody ever the wiser but me and Mother Brimblecombe. But where a cleverer man or a sharper woman would have seed through the game, Masterman didn't, and Milly didn't neither, and me and the old woman laughed in secret when the pair of 'em pitied our silliness about the frog, and said that 'twas time, and more than time, such old-fashioned nonsense was forgot. But, as I said to Masterman, when he flouted the idea: 'You silly zany,' I said, 'why, you ought to take off your hat to a frog for evermore, for where would you be now if you hadn't sought for one?'

"They wedded next Eastertide, and Milly took in washing, and shone at it. 'Twasn't till I left Princetown that I lost Reep; and I'd have been very pleased for him to come along with me. But his wife didn't want to go, and he got another job—to the Duchy Hotel. He's there yet, and very well thought upon. Never had no childer, and a sorrow to him, I believe, but no loss to her."

GEORGE WILLIAM, FAILURE.

By C. J. CUTCLIFFE HYNE.



BELIEVE (*said the owner of the expensive, big red motor-car*) that nearly all respectable families take a pride in owning a family skeleton, but ours was the exception that proves the rule.

My father was first baronet by his own exertions. My mother got well into the county set within a year of our getting a second house besides the one in Manchester. My brother Albert, who was to succeed to the title, took a First in the Modern History Tripos at Cambridge, and rowed seven in the Hall boat. He was made a director of the business the day it was turned into a limited, although, of course, he always intended to go in for Parliament, and said quite openly that, before he had done, he intended to turn the baronetcy into a peerage. And my sister, of course, married Lord Mounclement.

That's a pretty good record, as I'm sure you'll agree, for one family, and I may tell you. too, that I had three paternal uncles, and they were all doing well for themselves and their groups in this world, and as well as they knew how for the next. My mother's only brother, George William Tordoff, was the only blot on the family pride.

Not only amongst ourselves in Manchester, but to his face as well, we called Uncle George William the Failure. Of course, he had his points. Knocking about the world, probably, had rubbed the angles off him, and, personally, this struck me very clearly. My father, of course, prided himself on being a sturdy Lancashire lad, and if we of the younger end did not exactly take delight in our accent and mannerisms, we were quite conscious of having them, all the same.

Now, George William hadn't any accent. He talked just plain King's English, without frills to it, and any mannerisms he had were those one sees in good London clubs. Also he was a judge of pictures, horses, caviare, grouse moors, steam yachts, and wine. We had all these, and he hadn't. But it is an unpleasant fact that he was an expert where the whole gang of us were frankly amateurs. That writing fellow, R. L. Stevenson, makes a distinction between experts and connoisseurs, and I don't know where it comes in. But, anyway, George William was both. Take port, for instance. He could tell you the vintage every time by just sniffing it, and the shipper three times out of four. I regret to say that on occasion he drank more port than was good for him. But then none of the rest of us had palate enough ever to want to do such a thing.

So far as one can hit off anybody in a phrase, I should say Uncle George William could best be described as a man of high imagination. If he had possessed the gift of spelling, he might have become a famous novelist. As it was, he always tried to turn his gift to commercial uses. His first company was formed to fish up the treasure sunk in an Armada galleon off the Mull of Cantire, and he always held that if the thing had not been under-capitalised, they would have got the booty. He organised buried-treasure hunts in Trinidad and the Cocos Islands, about which the less said the better. Then he was struck by a brilliant idea of one big combine for all the steam laundry businesses in Lancashire. Cut-throat competition would be stopped automatically, and big dividends were inevitable. The thing was as safe as consols—on paper. My father, who had no belief in the treasure hunts and all the other preceding ventures, saw legitimate business in this laundry combine, and went in heavily, and was lured on to the board. He lost a pot of money over it, and was sore to the day of his death over the way the papers commented on his resignation from the directorate.

And there were other ventures. I will not go through the melancholy list. Some of you know them as well as I do, and can guarantee that they were one and all failures. In fact, if nine-tenths of his acquaintances were asked to describe G. W. Tordoff, they would put him down as an unsuccessful and somewhat shady company promoter.

Still, in spite of all this, I can't help

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owning up that I liked him. The balance of the family frankly shuddered when they saw his name on a prospectus. I'm afraid I had the impudence to be rather sorry for him. But then, of course, I was the younger son, and of no special account. There was no chance at that time of the baronetcy ever coming my way.

Now, I hope you haven't been bored by all this, but it was necessary for those of you who didn't know the man personally to have some idea of his previous record, before you could understand exactly what followed.

The family generally hadn't heard of, or from, George William for upwards of two years, and openly rejoiced. I'd had letters from time to time, reporting want of progress, but as I did not wish to make myself unpopular by letting on I was in correspondence with the poor old Failure, I lay low and said nothing about it. He'd got bitten this time by mining fever, and was on the track of soft things in Alta California, in Cripple Creek, in Alaska, in an Arizona desert, and then in Mexico. But it was Mexico that really held him. Mexico, according to him, was the richest country that ever was, and only waiting to be discovered. Denounce a claim anywhere along the Sierra Madre, put in a bit of capital, and in a year's time you could buy up three Rand millionaires before breakfast. How I used to laugh over those letters! At times he was so enthusiastic as to be almost convincing—if one hadn't known him.

But finally he wrote he'd found Golconda, and he'd settled down once for all till he was a millionaire. It wasn't going to take him long. The mine was there, full to the grass-roots with silver-gold ore, that ran sixty pounds to the ton, and only needed working. He'd a partner, a house, a delightful garden, and plenty of capital to develop the mine. Incidentally, the partner had a daughter. "I'd give a lot," George William wrote, "if I'd married early, and had a girl like Mary. When you come out to see me, I expect you'll fall in love with Mary. All the youngsters round here do. But, of course, she's a heap too good for any of them." He wanted me to come out at once and pay them a long visit.

I replied to that, congratulating him on his success, and he was so pleased with my letter that he sent me a box of *aveceites* and *papaias*, and other choice fruits from his garden, that arrived in a state of advanced decay. The mine was panning out even better than he had dared to hope, and Mary was being measured by correspondence, and buying a new frock from Paris. I showed that letter to father, who prophesied that the mine shaft would tumble in, and who hoped that George William would be at the bottom when it did.

I did not hand on this unpleasant wish, but—perhaps because Mary interested me—wrote back from time to time as the whim moved me. George William, on his part, sent lumps of ore from the mine which looked to me like road metal, but which, from the assay pasted on to them, contained fabulous percentages of precious metals. He also sent sub-tropical fruits of Mary's picking which must have caused much anguish amongst those postal officials through whose hands they passed. But he did not renew his original invitation to come out and see things for myself. "I want you just to wait a bit longer till we've got the Esperanza developed up to the producing stage, and the ore buyers are sitting outside this office quarrelling as to which shall have the pleasure of writing us the biggest cheque. We're a bit bothered with water in the shaft at present. Our Cameron sinker pump broke down the other day, and although we baled with a valve-bucket, the water gained on us. You see, it's the wet season just now. Nothing out of the ordinary—rain arriving on scheduled time, and dry season ticked off ahead to the minute on the almanack, though, of course, it's annoying for the moment. However, Dalkeith doesn't grumble, and as he's really doing the development work, I mustn't grumble, either."

From this I deduced that Mr. Dalkeith was the man who was paying for things, and Mary was Mary Dalkeith. I looked at the wrecks of the fruit consignments, and pictured her, in white clothes and elbow sleeves, gathering the delicacies of her garden for an unknown in whom she had not the smallest interest. And I hoped that Dalkeith's dollars would be spun out thriftily on George William's mine, and that a decent time would elapse before the poor old Failure's wanderings began afresh.

He lived on the mine—the Esperanza, he called it—six months before the expected happened; but it came then all right. The tidings arrived in a big fat linen envelope stuck all over with twenty-five centavo stamps, sealed in four places, and obtrusively registered. I grinned when I recognised George William's fist in the address. Inside were three long-winded reports "respectfully submitted" by gentlemen whose spelling was

weak and whose names I didn't know. Also there was a stack of blue prints which I'm afraid conveyed remarkably little impression to me. They gave various views of sundry adits, shafts, winzes, and stopes. Also, what was most vehemently insisted on was a thing called an ore-chute, which was represented by dotted lines as running between the second level and the fourth, and which conservative estimate, according to the surveys and values, the Esperanza must have carried within its limits gold and silver bullion to the tune of over three hundred and fifty million sterling; and even allowing a big margin above the "cost of extraction" figures which they so confidently gave, there was a sure £170,000,000.

"Really," I said to my father when I



"Did Don Domingo know of a valuable mine?"

one was asked to carry downwards—in the imagination—to unknown profundities. On the various assay sheets the most opulent "values per ton" were scattered about in generous profusion, and the most clamorous italics insisted that one should carry in mind the great axiom that "in this camp values always increase with depth." I have a taste for figures, and worked up some of those that George William's experts provided. At a handed him the papers and the letter which accompanied them—"really there might be a little something in it."

His reply wasn't even civil, but I admit its pungency.

"There is a further point," I went on. "Uncle, as you see, says he gives you the first chance of financing the thing. If you don't snap at the offer, he'll come to England himself and raise the wind elsewhere."

It was here that Albert put in his word. "We must head him off. Father, you must pay. We can't have that disreputable Failure coming over here to stir up more dirty water just now. It would be just pie to the other side if he did, and the Government would see in that an excuse for not giving you the peerage."

Father slowly drew a coronet on his blotting-paper. "And all our hard work and outlay as good as wasted," said he thoughtfully.

Politically, of course, neither father nor Albert believed in the House of Lords, but you can bet that privately they knew what was what as well as other people. And if ever they were inclined to forget—well, I guess that mother was always on hand to keep them up to a full sense of the duty they owed the family.

"I've earned a reward if ever a man did," said father, elaborating his sketch. "But the party are very ungrateful."

"Once you get into the Upper House," said Albert, "you can take your choice as to which set of benches you sit on."

By the way he said it, there was not the least doubt as to what he meant, and I looked to father to see him flare up, or faint, or frown, or at least do something. But except that he went on drawing, he did nothing.

So I whistled, and Albert turned on me sharply enough. "Don't be a hypocrite. We're talking amongst ourselves here, and we needn't pretend. What did father send me to Uppingham and Trinity Hall for? Do you think he didn't foresee a time when we should change from the old groove and move up amongst better people?"

"We aren't there yet," I suggested.

"No, and shan't be if we let that Failure come back and start floating another of his shady companies. There's nothing that pulls a rising man back like disreputable relations. Father, you must take up the tinpot shares he offers you."

"I never invested in a mine yet, and I don't intend to begin. Besides, if a thing like that got out, it would damage even our credit."

"You can't afford," said Albert doggedly, "to ignore uncle till you are safely in the Upper House."

"I am not going to ignore him, nor am I going to invest in his mine. I am going to pension him off."

Albert looked at him in frank admiration. "Well, father," he said, "I beg your pardon for thinking you were a bit slow. I did not know that you had as fine a scheme as that at the back of your head. And so exit the Failure from our plan of existence."

"Two hundred pounds a year, paid quarterly," father announced, "so long as he stays away from England and creates no fresh scandal. You," he said to me, "are due to go to New Orleans next week to see our cotton buyers. You must travel on to this place in Mexico with the unpronounceable name, and see the fellow yourself. You'll find that he'll snap at the offer fast enough. But get his acceptance down in black and white, and have it witnessed. As for these papers"—my father took the reports and blue prints and tore them viciously—"you can say that they have received proper attention."

I do not know that I started out with any very firm intention to carry out these instructions to the foot of the letter. I had announced my impending arrival in a communication that was, to say the least of it, non-committal, and at the St. Charles at New Orleans found an invitation waiting for me which began "My dearest boy," and ended "Your affectionate old Uncle." Somehow, I had never looked upon him as much my senior before, but this letter showed me that he was both elderly and in bad health. He had sent me a snapshot photographic group to prove that he was neither, and which proved just the reverse. The photograph also contained what I very badly wanted to see, and that was a picture of Mary Dalkeith. I propped it up against the waffle dish and sat there and stared at her, and just drank her in. She was simply wonderful. She was—well, I must take this yarn in proper order, or it will get tangled up. I'm not a clear-headed man like father.

I'm afraid I didn't think very much about poor partner Dalkeith. That wretched Cameron sinker pump, whatever it might be, had given trouble again, and Dalkeith had gone down the shaft to put it right, and the beastly thing had broken adrift, and pinned him down in the bottom of the sump and ignominiously drowned him. Perhaps you'll think it was brutal of me to dismiss poor Dalkeith like that. But I am only telling you facts, and you must remember that I had barely given the man a thought before. It was the daughter who had interested me. Still, I also made up my mind at that point to let Uncle George down very gently.

Juaquatitlan—which I didn't a bit know how to pronounce at first— is in the State of

Sonora, and hard to get at. One went down by railroad to She-wa-wa—which they spell Chi-hua-hua—first of all, and then got on board a thing called a coach, and travelled along a river-bed which was the local equivalent of road. When the river-bed gave way to the simple precipice, one took to a horse which, if one could judge from its highly developed climbing gear, had a strong cross of monkey in it. Juaquatitlan Cathedral, which is of amber-coloured stone, and which would hold three thousand people comfortably, one can see forty miles away. Juaquatitlan City is built of mud, but does not need further notice. Uncle George was in one of the best houses in the place, and Mary's garden had its irrigating water drawn up from the well by a tin windmill on a tall derrick which always squeaked when the wind blew.

I found Uncle George ill—in fact, a good deal more ill than he seemed to think. He had omitted to mention that when Dalkeith came by that accident in the shaft, he had been there too, and had broken four ribs and a leg in the effort to save him, and, in fact, had been supposed to be as dead as his partner when the pair of them were hauled out to daylight. Of course, it was just like the silly old ass to say nothing about it, but if he had only had the sense to let me know what a mess he was in, I could have hurried up instead of messing about so long with the boys on New Orleans Cotton Exchange. It was pretty rough luck on Mary, too, being left alone in charge, and if she hadn't been so tremendously capable, I can't imagine how even she could have seen it through.

But, to hear him talk, you'd have thought his own smash-up was the smallest of troubles. The Esperanza was the only thing he wanted to yarn about, and he bored me with its glories and its opulence from morning to night.

To start with, it was an *antigua*—that is, a mine that had been worked by the Spaniards in the old days just after the conquest of Mexico. Enormous sums had been drawn from it. Amongst other things, the cathedral had been built out of the proceeds, and two great families of grandees still strut in Spain to-day on fortunes originally quarried from the Esperanza in Juaquatitlan. Thereafter came revolutions and an inroad of Yaqui Indians. All shades of political opinion robbed the property of all the ready cash they could lay hands on; and when the industry by this means was stopped, and the town was unable to pay any more taxes, no one seemed to think that it was worth guarding any more. So down came the Indians and killed out the remaining whites, and sat down in undisturbed possession of the whole city and district till the year of grace nineteen five.

At that date a regiment of President Porfirio Diaz's *rurales* visited the place on a matter of arrears of taxes, collected what was due, made "good Indians" of all conscientious objectors, and reported the mineral tract "open to denunciation." George William rode in on the heels of the proclamation.

He seems to have grinned affably round the plaza for a day, and then made friends with an Indian who kept a *pulqueria*—one Domingo Guquia. Did Don Domingo know of a valuable mine that one could denounce in the neighbourhood? Don Domingo did not. If a dollar for *dulces* for the children would assist memory, and the Señor Don Domingo would allow the *niños* to accept such an infinitesimal trifle? . . . The Señor Gringo was most munificent. . . . And, by a happy thought, there was the old Esperanza mine that nobody had paid taxes on these fifty years, if the Señor cared for it. . . . Yes, those would be the dumps up yonder, beside that *barranca*, though all covered with *mesquite* scrub these days. . . . The *arrastra* was lower down the hillside. . . .

Poor uncle chuckled mightily over that small piece of outlay. "It cost me no prospecting at all," he told me a dozen times. "Just for a couple of shillings scrambled amongst the youngsters, the pub-keeper took me right on to the spot, and before a week was out I'd found four levels with their faces still in good ore. I saw at the end of three days I'd got hold of the biggest silver-gold proposition in Mexico, and I fetched back Mary and her father when I rode down to make my denouncement and pay the fees at the mine office. A ten *pertenencia* take would have covered the lot, but I put in for thirty, because acreage looks well if ever you want to float."

Of course, you'll say the obvious retort to all this was, if the mine was so tremendously valuable, why didn't it pay straight away? Well, being a sort of mining man myself now, I may say mines don't exude dividends till money has been put into them for development, as a rule. However, like yourself, I didn't know that then. But I did understand poor old George William, who'd never made a penny in his life, and I didn't ask any inconvenient questions. I helped to dress uncle when he got up in the

morning, and worked his stiff leg and his hurt arm, and housemaided round generally. Mary said that was the way I could make myself useful the best.

Obviously the mine was in pretty bad condition when Dalkeith and Uncle George first sat down to tackle it seriously. There wasn't a straight shaft on the whole place. There were lots of those snake-shafts with cat-ladders in them, up which the Indians in the old days used to bring the stuff in skin bags. And there were caved adits that had run in on the vein pretty nearly as thick as the teeth of a rake. They had left pillars in their stopes, but the stulls were all rotted away, and the ground was so shaky that the upper workings were best left alone. But this didn't matter. The vein was richer than ever where the old Spaniards had left off at the three-hundred-foot level. The only trouble was that, according to their scheme of engineering, one went down an incline shaft to a fifty-foot level, then a quarter of a mile along that, then down a dozen chicken ladders and along another level, then down a winze by sticking your feet in the sides, till it took half a day to get down to the bottom workings, and the air there was so bad that the old-time Indians must have had specially constructed lungs to breathe it.

So there was nothing for it but to make a fresh working shaft slap through to the three-hundred-foot level, and you'll say there was nothing in that.

But old George William, with his genius for failure, of course must needs use bits of the old shafts as far as they would go, and these caved in on them time after time, till their money for wages was nearly all frittered away. Then, as a climax, they tapped some old workings that were full of water, and the new shaft flooded. By this time uncle and Mr. Dalkeith were working as their own shift bosses, and I expect they were pretty incompetent for the job. Anyway, they finished up with a bad accident, as I have told you already, and the one of them got killed and the other badly smashed.

Of course, as you may guess, I said nothing about father's pension scheme when I got down to Juaquatitlan. And I am afraid that—when I got more chummy with Mary—I twisted father's financial intentions pretty badly. You see, Juaquatitlan, when you were actually there, living in a 'dobe house, and eating *tortillas* and *tasajo* and *frigoles*, and talking your best Spanish to the *moso*, seemed a powerful long distance from Manchester, and things that looked important at home seemed trifles in Mexico. So when, after some skirmishing around, uncle asked me point-blank what father was going to do, I just lied. You see, he'd had a pretty bad night of pain, and was looking all crumpled up, and I couldn't be brute enough to tell him the plain truth. Besides, Mary was looking on. So I just said I'd been sent out to investigate, and in the meanwhile what small amount of cash I had in my pocket could go towards current development.

"Well," said Uncle George, "I'm glad to hear Old Piety is doing the decent thing at last. He owes me a good turn after the way he crabbed that laundry combine." (Ye gods, here was a new view of it!) "Oh, it's quite true, though I suppose you're too young to remember. He saw it was a nailing good thing, so he spread rumours about the unsoundness of the business till he could buy in the one-pound shares at about four shillings, and so get control cheap. The trouble was, he overdid it. People got scared when the slump set in, and wouldn't send their washing. Afraid the combine would steal their shirts, I suppose. And so he got landed like everyone else. Naturally he was sore. I'm glad he's seen the error of his ways, and come into this new deal I'm able to offer him. I'll take darned good care he doesn't crab this, though. You see, it strikes me I'm getting a bit old and a bit sick, and I can't hunt round after soft things like I could. The Esperanza's simply got to provide my pile—and Mary's. Did I tell you Dalkeith left Mary without a centavo? Fact. Sank every copper he could raise in the Esperanza. So naturally I've made her my heiress."

I said a small swear to myself then that I'd keep that heiress provided with a decent income for life whether she married me or she didn't. I'd have given four teeth and my left foot for pluck enough to propose to her, but couldn't work up to it.

Some girls, I believe, when you're courting them, like you to give them flowers, and others you take for motor rides, and so on; but Mary's form of amusement was getting work done on the Esperanza to please George William. She soon twigged I didn't believe in it. As you know, she's far too sharp a young woman for a silly ass like me to fool for many minutes together. But her idea of dissipation was to wheedle another week's costs out of me, and I can tell you it was just pie for me to hear her do the persuading.

Sometimes I'd even get her to spin it out over a whole afternoon.

I hadn't much of an income then. You see, father prided himself on paying by results, and as he never thought I was much good at the business in Manchester, he didn't see the force of giving me more salary than I could get rid of pretty handily. But wages in Juaquatitlan weren't like Manchester. We got our drill men for a dollar Mex. a day—which is about two and a penny—and muckers never ran above seventy-five centavos, so that really I found a couple of sovereigns a week went a long way in pleasing Mary.

All this time, you are to understand, poor old Uncle George had been steadily growing weaker. I didn't know definitely what was the matter, and the doctor didn't know either, though he used long names and looked as wise as his squint would let him. But uncle presently began to know he was booked—although he'd never say so—and his anxiety to see that mine strike bonanza was pretty hard to look on at. That as much as Mary's asking presently began to loosen my purse-strings for the weekly pay-sheet.

We had chucked the shaft by this. There was no unwatering it except with a big new Cameron sinking pump and a new boiler, which I absolutely couldn't run to. But the foreman, in fossicking around through the *mesquite* bushes, had come across another old adit low down on the mountain-side that he thought would tap the three-hundred-foot level; and presently we were at work cleaning out the caves in this, and retimbering the soft places, and then getting two rounds of shots per day into the face. This occupation of digging holes in the Sierra Madre didn't amuse me in the least; but when a man you're very fond of, and who's dying by inches before your face, asks you to do it, you've no way out, especially if the girl you're badly in love with backs him up.



"They would drop in and talk mining shop with Uncle George."

There were three other ragged mining

men in Juaquatitlan, and most evenings they would drop in and talk mining "shop" with Uncle George, whilst the tin windmill that watered the garden squeaked in the night breeze. They were all three, to hear them, the owners of untold wealth, though to the Manchester eye they were all stone broke, and I doubt if any one of them had had a square meal for a month. The one thing they were always down on me for was for looking at mining as at all speculative. Mining, according to them, was a plain business proposition: you had so much stuff in the ground at so much value per ton; the only problem was to get it out and convert it into bullion at the lowest possible rate. When I first came out, uncle used to watch me listening to all this stuff, and I used to see the sly laugh leaking out at the corners of his lips. But as the days went on, he took less interest in the talk. He'd sit looking at the low-hanging stars beyond the horizon, about a million miles away, and I got an idea that soon he'd shut his eyes and not open them again.

I was beginning to have a bit of trouble of my own, too, about this time. Development work on the Esperanza had mopped up all my ready cash, and I cabled for more.

Father cabled back, not in code, either: "Have you fixed up Failure's pension? Wire clearly."

I didn't wire. To start with, I'd nothing I cared to say, as father's view would be I'd merely failed to carry out instructions. Also cables cost two-and-a-penny a word, and I was beginning to count my remaining coppers. It wasn't that I believed in the mine, you know, but there seemed a chance of uncle lasting another day or two, and I'd just got to keep him amused.

And so, perhaps, I'd better skip the details of how Mary and I pinched and squeezed, and sacked the *moso*, and sold her garden truck to the Indians in the plaza, and sold my watch and spare clothes to that infernal scoundrel, the *jefe politico*, and jump on to the time when we made the strike. For make it we did, with practically the last round of shots I could afford to pay for.

It was just the head of an ore-chute sticking up in the floor of the drift, but in places it was two-thirds pure silver with high gold values, and in twenty-five-ton lots it ran about one thousand four hundred pounds a ton. Of course it was a lenticular deposit, which widened for a bit and then drew together, but we did not know that then, and the ore-buyers came crowding into Juaquatitlan like turkey buzzards over a dead pig.

But even that couldn't keep uncle alive. He just drifted out. He died in his chair on the piazza the evening after we had got into bonanza, looking at those far-off stars and listening to the squeak of the windmill.

I was for clearing out then. My usefulness seemed to have ended, and, you see, Mary was a great heiress. But she wouldn't have it. She was awfully decent about it. So we were married by a bishop in the great amber-coloured cathedral, with incense and acolytes and all the rest of it, and I'm afraid the chapel in Manchester groaned over me as a backslider when they saw the news in the paper.

Of course, the Esperanza did not go on to the tune of fourteen hundred pounds a ton, but we bagged eighty thousand pounds before we cleared out of that lense of ore, and had got a *pukka* engineer on the job, and had done a lot of development work, and a twenty-stamp mill put up, all out of revenue, and had a good steady three-pound-a-ton milling ore from twenty other faces rolling in as fast as we wanted it before the original chute finally pinched.

In fact, it is the Esperanza I keep up the baronetcy on now. The cotton business, as you know, soon drooped after Albert and my father died; and, privately, I always consider I was the Failure of the family, and not George William. You see, I always was a silly ass at business.

WINTER.

THE earth goes soberly in brown,
Though here and there,
To make her fair,
The red leaves deck her gown.

And sometimes, at the fall of night,
A veil of lawn
Is round her drawn,
To hide her from our sight.

But robed in colours or in brown,
In flowered vest,
Or sober drest,
We love her ev'ry gown.

WALTER E. GROGAN.

OUR LETTERS.

By J. HOLT SCHOOLING.



F all the valuable and interesting official reports issued by the various Governmental Departments of this country, perhaps no report relates more closely to our social and commercial life and activities than that of the Postmaster-General. Moreover, this member of the Cabinet is, as regards his office, outside of political warfare, and thus his reports are wholly free from the almost unavoidable bias that has, in some notable instances, deprived certain other official reports of some of their value.

The Postmaster's current report enables us to form an idea of the gigantic amount of work done by the Post Office. For instance, the number of postal packets delivered in the United Kingdom during the year ended March 31, 1909, was as follows :—

POSTAL PACKETS DELIVERED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	Number.	Average Number for each Person.
Letters	2,907,000,000	65
Halfpenny Packets	953,000,000	21
Post-cards	860,000,000	19
Newspapers	202,000,000	4½
Parcels	113,000,000	2½
Total	5,035,000,000	112

The mind is wholly unable to realise the meaning of this vast number of postal packets delivered in the United Kingdom by our postmen in one year only.

Comprehension may be aided by stating that if one man had to sort these letters, etc., working at the rate of sixty per minute—quick work—he would have had to begin nearly one hundred and sixty years ago, in the reign of George II., before the conquest of India began under Lord Clive, in order to complete his task by the year 1910, working day and night without stopping.

This vast result also means that 112 postal packets are received yearly per head of the population of the United Kingdom.

An interesting feature of the report deals with the various countries to which we send letters, and from which we receive them.

Dealing now with letters and post-cards only, we have the following results :—

LETTERS AND POST-CARDS DESPATCHED FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	Lbs.	Per cent. of Total.
To Europe	1,649,000	43
To America	1,044,000	27
To Asia	474,000	12
To Africa	416,000	11
To Australasia	286,000	7
Total	3,869,000	100

Thus, as regards continents, we send many more letters and post-cards to European addresses than to any other continent. No less than 43 per 100 of our letters go to Europe.

The foreign letters and post-cards received by us come from the five continents as follows :—

LETTERS AND POST-CARDS SENT TO THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	Lbs.	Per cent. of Total.
From Europe	1,533,000	47
From America	964,000	29
From Asia	325,000	10
From Africa	280,000	9
From Australasia	164,000	5
Total	3,266,000	100

No fewer than 47 per 100 of the letters and post-cards we receive come from Europe.

Comparison of the two preceding statements shows that we send away many more letters than we receive. This excess of letters despatched from the United Kingdom over letters sent into the United Kingdom applies to each of the five continents.

As regards some separate nations, in place

of continents, our despatch of letters and post-cards is as follows :—

LETTERS AND POST-CARDS DESPATCHED FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	Lbs.	Per cent of Total.
To the United States.	507,000	13·1
To France	419,000	10·8
To Germany . . .	410,000	10·6
To Canada and Newfoundland	380,000	9·8
To India	311,000	8·0
To South African Colonies	284,000	7·4
To Australia . . .	196,000	5·1
To Holland. . . .	169,000	4·4
To Belgium . .	117,000	3·0
*To all other Countries	1,076,000	27·8
Total	3,869,000	100·0

* To each of the countries in this group we despatch more than 100,000 lbs. of letters.

We see that the United States receive more of our letters and post-cards than are received by any other one nation. Rather more than 13 per 100 of our letters are despatched to the United States ; and the nine countries above-named are those to which most of our letters are sent. These nine countries receive, in all, nearly three-quarters of all the letters and post-cards we send out of the United Kingdom.

Some countries that receive fewest letters from us are Asiatic Turkey, Persia, Mexico, Central America States, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela.

The following table relates to the countries that send most letters to us :—

LETTERS AND POST-CARDS SENT TO THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	Lbs.	Per cent. of Total.
From the United States	537,000	16·4
From Germany. . .	448,000	13·7
From France . . .	383,000	11·7
From Canada and Newfoundland . .	319,000	9·8
From India	206,000	6·3
From South African Colonies	182,000	5·6
From Holland . . .	118,000	3·6
From Australia. . .	109,000	3·3
From Belgium . . .	95,000	2·9
From all other Countries	369,000	26·7
Total	3,266,000	100·0

These nine countries are the same as those named in the preceding table, but the order of them varies considerably. The United States again head the list, and they send to us more than 16 of every 100 letters we receive from over the sea.

Countries that send to us more letters than we send to them are the United States and Germany. And we send to France, Canada, India, South Africa, Australia, Holland, Belgium more letters than those countries respectively send to us.

The nine countries in the last table send to us nearly three-quarters of all the foreign letters we receive.

The foregoing international results relate only to letters and post-cards. If we include, in addition, the weight of the circulars, book-packets, patterns, and newspapers which we despatch and receive, the preceding totals are vastly increased.

LETTERS, POST-CARDS, AND OTHER POSTAL PACKETS DESPATCHED FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	Lbs.	Per cent. of Total.
To America . . .	9,993,000	31·2
To Europe . . .	9,680,000	30·2
To Asia	5,495,000	17·2
To Africa. . . .	3,860,000	12·1
To Australasia . .	2,983,000	9·3
Total . . .	32,011,000	100·0

Thus, when all postal packets are included, America is at the head of the continents to which we despatch these packets. Europe comes second, instead of holding the first place as when only letters and post-cards are considered.

The postal packets coming into the United Kingdom from the five continents are as follows :—

LETTERS, POST-CARDS, AND OTHER POSTAL PACKETS SENT TO THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	Lbs.	Per cent. of Total.
From Europe . .	5,412,000	40·6
From America . .	4,789,000	35·9
From Australasia .	1,273,000	9·6
From Asia . . .	1,064,000	8·0
From Africa . .	791,000	5·9
Total . . .	13,329,000	100·0

Europe ranks first as a sender of all postal packets to us. We receive from countries in Europe over 40 per 100 of all the postal packets that enter the United Kingdom.

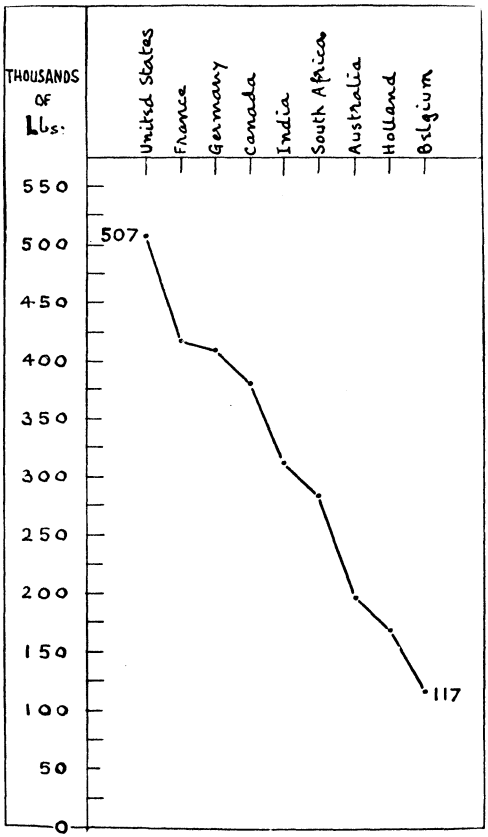
By comparing the two preceding statements relating to all postal packets, we see a remarkable difference between the weight of postal matter we despatch and the weight we receive. We send away the huge quantity of over 32,000,000 lbs., and we receive only 13,000,000 lbs. In other words, we despatch from two to three times as much postal matter as we receive. This predominance of postal matter despatched by us over

postal matter received by us applies to each of the five continents.

There is a remarkable difference as regards letters delivered in each part of the United Kingdom relatively to population.

LETTERS DELIVERED IN EACH PART OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, PER HEAD OF POPULATION.

England and Wales	70
Scotland	53
Ireland	38
United Kingdom	65



LETTERS AND POST-CARDS DESPATCHED FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM TO VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

And the great relative predominance of London in the postal activity of England and Wales is notable.

LETTERS DELIVERED IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

	Millions.	Per cent. of Total.
Country Offices	1,698	68
London District	784	32
All England and Wales	2,482	100

No fewer than 32 per 100 of all letters delivered in England and Wales are delivered in the London district—nearly one-third. Bearing in mind the respective areas of the London district and of the country districts of England and Wales, it is remarkable that London should receive almost one-third of all the letters delivered. This is, of course, due to the dense population in and about London, and it must be a profitable section of the Post Office business, as many of the letters are conveyed for short distances. Perhaps the Post Office profit on the London district should come under the head of "unearned increment," for it is certainly due to the growth of the population in that part of the country.

Postal activity increases largely. Letters delivered in the United Kingdom have, in the last ten years, steadily increased from 55 to 65 per head of population.

Here is a summary covering the last decade, which relates respectively to letters, post-cards, halfpenny packets, newspapers, delivered in the United Kingdom, per head of population :—

Year.	Number delivered in United Kingdom per Head of Population.				
	Letters.	Post-cards.	Halfpenny Packets.	Postal Newspapers.	Total.*
1900	55	10	17	4	86
1901	57	10	18	4	89
1902	59	11	18	4	92
1903	61	12	19	4	96
1904	61	14	19	4	98
1905	61	17	20	4	102
1906	62	18	21	4	105
1907	64	19	21	4	108
1908	65	19	21	4	109
1909	65	19	21	4	109

* Not including Parcels.

The biggest relative growth has been in post-cards, which have increased from 10 to 19 per head of population. This growth is largely due to the picture post-card habit. Taking all the above postal packets, the increase during the last decade has been from 86 to 109 per head of the population of the United Kingdom.

As regards parcel post, often at this season a very pleasant addition to our letters, the number of parcels delivered in the United Kingdom during the last decade has grown from 75,000,000 to 113,000,000. The revenue from postage on these parcels now amounts to about £2,250,000, or $2\frac{1}{4}$ million pounds sterling. The Post Office retains rather more than one-half of this yearly revenue from parcels, and hands over the balance to the railway companies for their share in carrying Christmas and other parcels.

LORD STRANLEIGH, PHILANTHROPIST.

By ROBERT BARR.

I. BORROWING STRANLEIGH'S NAME.

THERE comes a period in the life of every man when, no matter how successful he may have been, he thinks for the moment he has chosen the wrong career. The comedian yearns to play Hamlet, and the world-renowned portrayer of the melancholy prince imagines he could set audiences in a roar of laughter. The carpenter regrets that he did not select the trade of blacksmith, and the blacksmith, as he mops his perspiring brow over red-hot irons, hankers for the ice business, while the ice man wishes he dealt in coal.

Young Lord Stranleigh began to realise the futile part he played in the affairs of the world at the time his friend and colleague Mackeller broke down in health. Now, Mackeller was a much more stalwart man than the slim and elegant Stranleigh, yet a London specialist informed him that his nerves were gone; that worry and anxiety had for the last few years so strained the heart that the price of prolonged existence was complete cessation from work, and withdrawal from business of any kind.

An English specialist who has successfully attended a member of the Royal Family, thus attaining instantaneously a European fame that years of hard work would never have achieved, does not temper the wind to the shorn lamb, but states the result of his diagnosis with a terseness that rather appals the ordinary man. The blow in Mackeller's case was softened by the fact that the big-boned Scotchman did not believe a word the expert said. There was nothing the matter with him, he averred, but an occasional distressing shortness of breath. His trouble was bronchial, and not cardiac, he insisted. The famous physician shrugged his shoulders indifferently.

"If you know so much of your own condition, why trouble to come to me?" he asked, with some show of reason.

"It is quite impossible for me," continued Mackeller, "to cease work at a moment's notice, as you suggest. Very large interests are involved, and any neglect of them might be ruinous."

"That's what every business man says," replied the doctor. "In your case, keep on as you are doing, and you have less than six months to live."

Peter Mackeller listened to this sentence of death with bowed head and furrowed brow, still incredulous. Nevertheless, being an intensely practical man, his mind at once took up a search for an alternative. Perhaps, after all, this gruff medico might know what he was talking about. Never during his strenuous life had Peter experienced a single day's illness. The strong physique which his Highland ancestry had transmitted to him could surely not break down thus completely before he reached middle life. Most of his forefathers had died young at a hundred. Peter muttered to himself, rather than addressed the doctor—

"Perhaps Stranleigh would take charge of my affairs for a while."

"Do you refer to Lord Stranleigh?" asked the expert.

"Yes; he's an old friend of mine. He has got me out of trouble several times—I mean, of course, financial trouble."

"You say Lord Stranleigh of Wychwood is a friend of yours?"

"Yes."

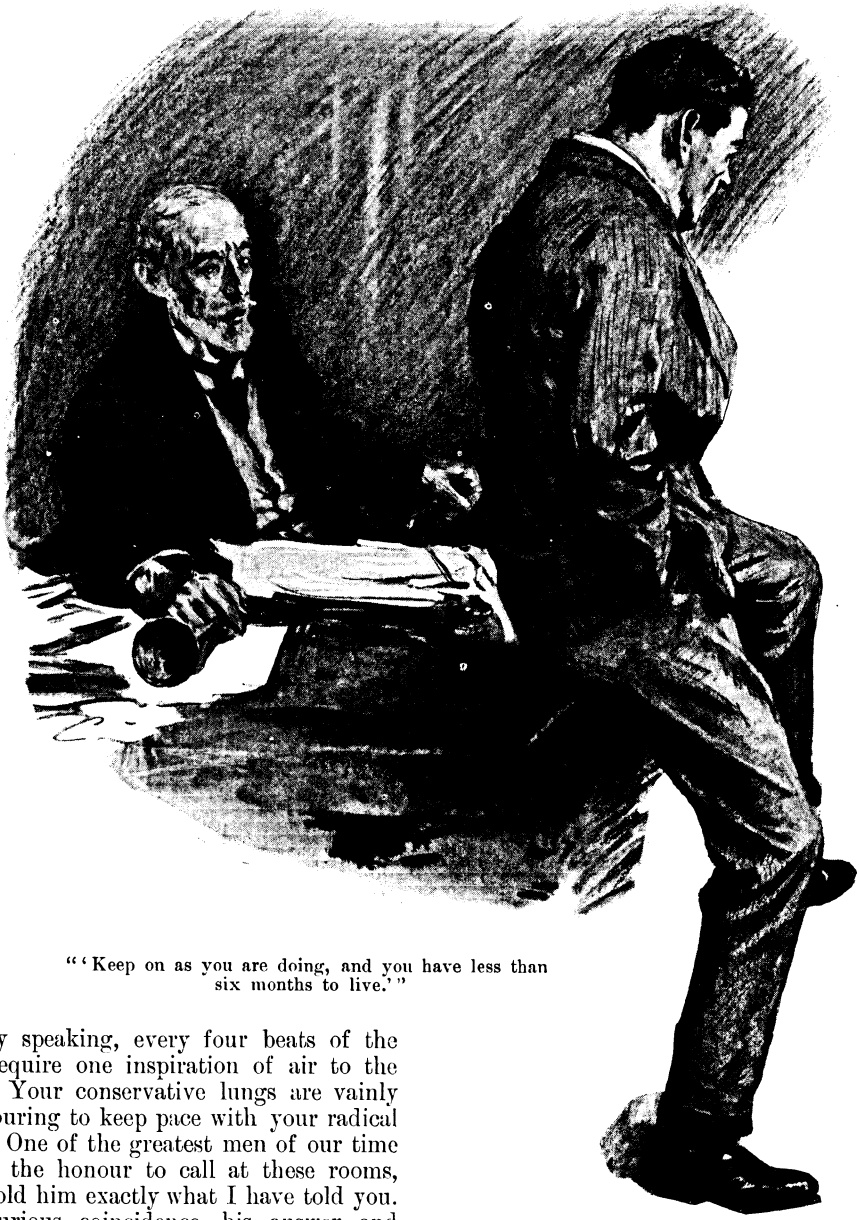
"Well, if any man in England can afford monetary aid without feeling it, it is his wealthy lordship. I should be glad if you would bring him here one day, when I could discuss your case with him more freely than I can with you."

"There has been no lack of definiteness about your statements to me," said Mackeller, looking up. "You need not reproach yourself on that score."

The great man smiled for the first time. He had been visibly impressed by the friendship with Lord Stranleigh, for, after all, even the Royalties he attended were paupers compared with the youthful earl, and money talks in London as is its garrulous habit elsewhere.

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"You see, it's like this, Mr. Mackeller. Your heart is racing along at ninety-five beats to the minute, when it should be contenting itself with from sixty to sixty-five. Roughly speaking, every four beats of the heart require one inspiration of air to the lungs. Your conservative lungs are vainly endeavouring to keep pace with your radical heart. One of the greatest men of our time did me the honour to call at these rooms, and I told him exactly what I have told you. By a curious coincidence, his answer and yours were almost identical. He said it was impossible for him to stop work at the moment because of numerous engagements he had accepted, and further stated that the only inconvenience he suffered was an increasing shortness of breath. In six months he would knock off for a while, but he could not do it then. Before six months were past he was in Westminster Abbey. I suggest that you consult your friend Lord Stranleigh and bring him here, say a week from to-day, at this hour."



"'Keep on as you are doing, and you have less than six months to live.'"

With that Mackeller took his leave, still wondering how much truth, if any, there was in the doctor's prognostications. He stepped into the electric brougham awaiting

him in Harley Street, and curtly ordered his man to drive him to the office. Seated in the noiseless vehicle, he endeavoured to throw from his mind all thought of the doctor's doleful diatribe, and concentrate his attention on the business now awaiting him. He was disquieted to find that, in spite of himself, the sentence of six months kept running through his head like a recurring decimal. Suddenly he touched the electric button, and as the driver slowed down, directed him to turn round and proceed to Stranleigh House.

Although half the world had done half a day's work, the energetic Mackeller found, as he expected, that the easy-going young nobleman had just finished breakfast.

"Ah, Peter," cried his lordship, "there is little use in wishing you the top of the morning, for you have always transmuted the early golden hours into coin of the realm before one sees you. As the old adage says: 'Satan finds some mischief still——' No, no, that's the wrong one. Truth is, I'm hardly awake yet. What I wished to lay my hands on was, 'How doth the little busy bee improve each shining hour,' and gather money all the day, etc., etc. You've come in the nick of time for a sweet-when-the-morn-is-grey cigarette. Or perhaps you prefer a fragrant Havana?"

"No, thank you, Stranleigh. I've knocked off smoking."

"Really! Since when?"

"Since ten o'clock this morning. I have just come from a Harley Street specialist in heart disease. My own physician made an appointment with him for me at half-past nine. He is a man with more patients than he can rightly look after, and grants consultations at odd hours as if he were conferring a favour."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear you are feeling seedy. What did the specialist say?"

"He said I must instantly cease work, and this command comes at a most inconvenient time. It seems I need to undergo a complete rest for an indefinite period, so I wondered whether you would take charge of my business *pro tem.*"

"Certainly," said Stranleigh, the half-bantering, humorous expression disappearing from his face, giving way to a look of deep concern. "What did the doctor say was the trouble?"

"My heart has gone all wrong."

"Ah, the heart is a most important organ, which must be taken care of. It slumbers not, nor sleeps."

"The specialist tells me," replied the matter-of-fact Mackeller, "that the heart sleeps in that fraction of a second which occurs between beats."

"Really! I am profoundly ignorant about these things, but I keep a walking cyclopædia in the person of my friend Ponderby. What course of treatment does the doctor recommend?"

"We did not get that far. Probably I shall retire to my place in the country, where I can secure rest and quiet. He suggested that I should bring you with me a week from to-day, at 9.30."

"Why does he wish you to take me at that unearthly hour?"

"Oh, I suppose," replied Mackeller with impatience, "that everyone wishes to see the great Lord Stranleigh."

"Ah, yes, I had forgotten. Quite natural, quite natural. Did the doctor counsel your country place as a sanatorium?"

"No, that was my own idea."

"I believe your country house is connected with the City office by telephone?"

"Yes, it has that advantage."

"Pardon me, Peter: you mean disadvantage, and a very vital disadvantage, too. However, let us summon authority to our aid, for, as I tell you, I am profoundly ignorant."

He touched the bell, whereupon the grave and dignified Ponderby appeared, silently as a genie responding to the rubbing of a lamp.

"Ponderby, when a man is afflicted with an affection of the heart—I refer to a physical affection—what should he do?"

"It depends, my lord, upon whether he prefers to reside in France, Belgium, or Germany."

"He prefers, Ponderby, to live in England, but that is not the point. His chief desire is to live."

"The strongest waters for the purpose, my lord, are those at Bad-Nauheim, in Germany, a pretty little village to the east of the Taunus Mountains, twenty-three miles north of Frankfort-on-Main. The next strongest are those of Royat, in the centre of France, although the wells of Spa, in Belgium, are about equal in strength to the French waters."

"What do you mean by strength, Ponderby? Salt, sulphur, or what?"

"There is a very large proportion of salt in the waters at each place; but the strength I referred to, which has proved so beneficial in cardiac troubles, is carbonic acid gas held in solution by the waters of each district."

"Thank you, Ponderby."

Ponderby bowed, and vanished as silently as he had appeared.

"Well, Peter, there you are, with a choice of three nationalities and of three charming health resorts. Which do you prefer?"

"I should say Nauheim. As it possesses the strongest waters, the cure would probably take the shortest time," replied the practical Mackeller.

"That appears reasonable; still, we'd better make sure."

He touched the bell once more.

"Ponderby, I forgot to ask you, does one drink the waters at these places, or merely bathe in them?"

"In each locality, my lord, there are waters to drink, but the sprudel, or carbonic acid waters, are bathed in."

"Mackeller suggests that the waters at Nauheim being the strongest, a cure may be more quickly accomplished there."

"Not necessarily, my lord, for sprudel baths in their full strength are rarely administered at Nauheim. At each place treatment lasts from twenty-one days to six weeks, and it begins, not with the carbonic acid waters, but with salt baths in ever-increasing strength. All but the most serious cases yield to treatment in any of the three towns."

"In that case, Ponderby, it doesn't seem to matter much which an invalid chooses."

"I would not go so far as to say that, my lord," replied Ponderby in a tone of profound deference. "His most gracious Majesty the King of England visited Royat once or twice while Prince of Wales."

"Thank you, Ponderby; that is an unanswerable argument. Royat for royalty, as one may say."

For the second time the loyal Ponderby disappeared. When he had gone, Stranleigh laughed a little.

"Have you made your choice, Peter?" he asked; and Peter, apparently resenting the laugh when his case was so serious, replied, with sullen Scotch stubbornness: "I shall go to Nauheim."

"Right you are," cried his lordship, "and I'll go with you."

Mackeller glanced up at him in surprise.

"You promised to look after my business while I was absent."

"Of course."

"But you can't do it if you are absent with me."

"Didn't you hear Ponderby say that Nauheim was only twenty-three miles away from Frankfort?"

"What has that to do with the case?"

"Don't you know that Frankfort is the greatest financial city in Germany, if not in Europe? It is the town from which we draw, if not our Stranleighs, at least our Rothschilds, who have been reasonably successful in commercial affairs."

"I still don't see what connection that has with the matter in hand."

"Peter, if I am to take charge of your business, I must do it my own way. As I believe in going to the best spot for the cure of heart disease, I have made it my habit to select the best man I can find to transact each of the various affairs with which I deal. As you know, I employ twelve of the shrewdest business men I can secure. To the chief of these I shall turn over the general direction of your interests, and he will distribute the different sections among the eleven others."

This by-proxy proposal did not commend itself to Mackeller, who sat glum and depressed while the scheme was explained to him. Stranleigh, however, continued unperturbed—

"Of course, Peter, if you'd like to have the business conducted as you would do it yourself——"

"That's exactly what I wanted, if possible," interrupted Mackeller, "but I suppose such a condition of things is not to be hoped for."

"Oh, bless you, yes, it is. Anything may be accomplished if a man really makes up his mind to it. Instead of employing twelve competent men, I'll substitute for two or three of them an equal number of ordinary, fussy individuals who will muddle whatever is put in their charge, and thus reduce the average of excellence to your liking."

Peter scowled darkly at him.

"What we wish to attain," Stranleigh went on, ignoring his displeasure, "is, first of all, the restoration of your health. Quite a secondary consideration is the carrying on of your business. A doctor will tell you that during your cure you must not worry about temporal matters. Such advice is quite futile, because his patient can no more help worrying about things which may go wrong in his absence than he can cure himself by an effort of will. Now, I can do for you what the doctor can't. I can control your affairs under a guarantee, my guarantee being that if money is lost in any transaction carried out on your behalf, I will make good the deficiency. If money is made, it goes into your treasury. So, then, cast away all

thought of business, knowing that if you were in the most superb health, you could not accomplish more than I shall by giving such a security."

"Oh," said Mackeller, "I could not think of accepting so one-sided an arrangement as that. It is 'heads I win and tails you lose.'"

"Precisely. But the arrangement lasts only for a short period—six weeks at the most. Whatever losses I incur during that forty-two days will not matter a button to me, while it is imperative that the primary condition of your cure shall be achieved. I defy even a pessimistic growler like you to worry when you have accepted so advantageous a bargain. Now, we will regard that as settled, and I refuse to discuss it any more."

"My dear Stranleigh," said Mackeller, speaking with some difficulty, "Fate seems determined to place me under obligations to you that I can never repay."

"That's all right, Peter. Let us leave it with Fate. Now, will you be ready to depart with me for Nauheim to-morrow morning?"

"Oh, that is another thing I wish to speak to you about," said Mackeller. "I cannot accept such a sacrifice on your part. You would be bored to death at a health resort filled with invalids. You must not accompany me to Nauheim."

"Friend Peter, I ask you to allow me to be a little selfish on occasion. I am going to Nauheim to prove whether or not it will cure *me*."

"Cure *you!* Why, there's nothing wrong with your heart, is there?"

"We read that the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, and that's what's the matter with mine. I learned its state, not from a doctor, but through introspection. An incident that occurred last week startled me. I engineered a deal against a man who asserted at my club that all the *coups* for which I had received credit were the result of luck and not of brains. I used to believe myself that it was luck, but I wasn't going to permit a man to state that publicly, so I gave him fair notice and attacked some of his favourite interests on the Stock Exchange. On settlement day he was thirty thousand pounds to the bad, while I was richer by that amount. This was all as it should be; nevertheless, I caught myself, for the first time in my life, feeling an unholy joy at the accumulating of money. That frightened me. I saw that, if I went on, I should become like all the rest, raking money together into my bank account, not because I needed it, but for the mere pleasure of handling the rake. I also caught a glimpse of the haggard face of my opponent, and realised he had lost money he could not afford to lose, while I gained cash I didn't need. I understood for the first time the tension a man like my adversary must go through when a sum of even that size is in the balance. I had just determined before you came in to study the other side of the question.

"It is said that all the wrecks in the Atlantic ultimately gather in the Saragossa Sea. I resolved to find the Saragossa Sea of business, and observe the human wreckage accumulated there. I want to see the men of affairs who may have been successful or unsuccessful financially. I want to see them, not with a hawk-like predatory gleam in their eyes, as I have met them in London and New York, but when they are paying the price. I want to see them, not when they are paying in cash, but when they are paying with life. I want to see them, not gambling on the Stock Exchange, but when the grim figure of Death puts up the opposing stake. I want to see those men, a mere rumour of whose ill-health sets Wall Street in a tremble. I want to study the face of such a man when a famous specialist tells him he must cease all connection with the affairs of the world if he is to remain in it for another half-year."

"Good Heavens," groaned Peter, "that's what the doctor told me!"

"Oh, you're all right, Mac. I'm quite certain that, before two months are past, you will be as well as ever again. You are engaged in legitimate business, not in gambling. But now you know why I am going to Nauheim with you. Will the nine o'clock express from Charing Cross to-morrow morning be too early for you?"

"Too early for *me?*" cried Mackeller in amazement. "I should say not. But how about yourself?"

"Oh, I'll make the effort on an important occasion like this. That will enable us to catch the Ostend-Vienna *train de luxe*, which will drop us off at Frankfort. Still, it is a bit early, now you call my attention to it. Wait till I consult Ponderby."

When this well-informed man came in, Stranleigh said ingratiatingly—

"As you are in a measure responsible for our journey to Nauheim, perhaps you would be good enough in your own interests—for you are coming with me—to mention what train you prefer. I have been suggesting the

sumptuous and speedy Ostend-Vienna express. If that train does not rise to your ideas of luxury, I shall be glad to engage a special."

Ponderby's seriousness was in no way affected by his master's pretence that the servant's conduct was the chief consideration. He slightly inclined his head in acknowledgment of the persiflage, then replied soberly—



"'His lordship is not to be disturbed before eleven o'clock.'"

"I never recommend the Vienna express for any distance short of Nuremberg, where it arrives about eight in the morning. It reaches Frankfort at 3.29 a.m., an inconvenient——"

"That's quite enough, Ponderby," interrupted his lordship. "Although I might for once consent to reach Charing Cross at 9 a.m., I am jiggered if I'll alight at Frankfort at three in the morning. Trot us out another train, Ponderby."

"There's the afternoon train from Charing Cross, my lord, leaving at 2.20. Sleeping-car Ostend to Cologne. A run up the left bank of the Rhine by daybreak, arriving in Frankfort just before noon."

"That's all right, Ponderby. I need not ask you to have everything ready by two o'clock to-morrow afternoon."

"Thank you, my lord. Everything is ready at this moment."

"Ponderby is mistaken. I'm not ready," said Mackeller querulously.

Lord Stranleigh glanced at Peter with just the slightest touch of astonishment.

"Why, my dear Mac, I've given you five hours extra. I understood you were willing to take the nine o'clock train, and now you don't need to depart until two."

"Five hours are of no use to me—indeed, five days will probably prove inadequate. Half a dozen imperative affairs require my personal attention."

"What are they?" inquired Stranleigh, with mild indifference.

"I have points of disagreement with three men and two companies, any of which may lead to a suit at law unless diplomatically handled. If not settled before I leave, they will worry me all the time I am away."

"Ah, we mustn't allow that," said his lordship. "Now, just oblige me with the

names and addresses of your protagonists, the amount in dispute in each case, and also in each case the exact terms of a settlement satisfactory to you."

Reluctantly Mackeller did as requested, Ponderby providing him with paper and pencil, his lordship contenting himself by lighting cigarette after cigarette as an aid to business. While Mackeller wrote out his list, Stranleigh requested Ponderby to telephone solicitor number one, asking him to call immediately at Stranleigh House. When Mackeller handed the list to his host, the latter rose languidly, nevertheless with a distinct air of dismissal. He had had enough of that glum Scotchman for this particular occasion.

"Now, Peter," he said, "go home, and let nothing prevent your keeping the appointment with me at Charing Cross to-morrow afternoon at two. Bring your own valet with you. I am too selfish to spare Ponderby's ministrations. Besides, a crank like you would worry the sedate Ponderby into heart trouble before a week was past."

"I'm no crank," cried Mackeller angrily, "but a man of business who likes to see affairs carried on in a ship-shape way."

"Pardon me," replied Stranleigh, with the utmost placidness. "Unfortunately, spoken language does not differentiate between terms as the written word does. I'm not using American slang, but good solid German, when I call you a crank. I use a 'k,' not a 'c.' The German word for a man who is ill is *kranke*. More correctly, at this moment, you are a *herzkranke*. Do brush up your German, Peter. But anyhow, don't fail me at Charing Cross."

"Oh, that's all very well, Stranleigh, but while I'm in danger of being dragged before the law courts——"

"Within half an hour this possible litigation will be in the hands of the most competent solicitor in London, so I implore you, Peter, to go home, and allow me time to give a few orders. I must get into telegraphic communication with the German Government, in order that my own comfort, and incidentally yours, shall be properly looked after."

Mackeller proved very difficult to manage, as, indeed, all strenuous men are when they only half believe what the doctor tells them, and feel irritated at the thought of even a temporary suspension of business. Stranleigh, however, was imperturbably good-natured, though he sighed with relief when finally he got Peter aboard the sleeping-car at Ostend.

Peter did not sleep well during the early part of the night. He had looked up the route, and worried over the fact that he must rise before reaching Herbesthal, in order to pass his belongings through the German Customs. This ceremony, which would take place somewhere between four and five o'clock in the morning, he regarded as a stupid, thoroughly foreign proceeding; and furthermore, as the sleeping-car did not go beyond Cologne, at six o'clock he must get into the train for the left bank of the Rhine. Notwithstanding, during the long wait at Brussels he dropped off into a sort of stupor, having enjoyed little real slumber since learning the seriousness of his condition.

It was after nine o'clock when he woke with a jump, knowing that everything had gone wrong because of his temporary oblivion. His room was still dark, although sunshine struggled through chinks of the blinds. He turned on the electric light, and a glance at his watch threw him into a panic. The train was humming along merrily, and Heaven only knew in what direction it was going. More than three hours had elapsed since he should have changed carriages, and doubtless all his baggage was detained at the German frontier.

Trembling with excitement, he wrapped a dressing-gown round him, and stepped out into the corridor, where he was met by the unruffled Ponderby.

"I must see Lord Stranleigh at once," demanded Mackeller. "I wonder if he has the least notion into what part of Germany he has got us? And then there's the luggage—every stick of it held up at Herbesthal these four or five hours!"

"His lordship," responded Ponderby, pronouncing the title with gentle deference, "is not to be disturbed until eleven o'clock, as we approach Frankfort. This carriage goes through from Frankfort to Nauheim, as it came through Cologne for Frankfort. The luggage is all aboard, and has been examined. His lordship will breakfast between Frankfort and Nauheim, but I have orders to attend to your wants whenever you call. He recommends a nice fresh sole, which we took on at Ostend, or an excellent Rhine salmon, obtained at Cologne. His lordship is anxious to eliminate all cause of worry, and so empowered me to open and read to you any telegram that came from London. Already several messages have

been received pertaining to his own affairs, but one arrived half an hour ago, at our last stop, which may interest you. All your threatened law cases have been settled at a figure ten per cent. higher than you had stipulated for. I may tell you privately that in each case his lordship gave your opponents the opportunity of compromising on this basis, or being involved in law proceedings with his lordship himself. Such is the power of money that in every instance his lordship's reputation as a very wealthy man carried the day. Did you say sole or salmon, Mr. Mackeller ?"

"A grilled sole," muttered Mackeller, who thereupon retired to dress. Ponderby's words were unexceptionable, but his tone implied a subtle condescension which Mackeller resented. It was only too evident that Stranleigh's valet regarded him as a fussy muddler of affairs, in no way to be compared with his slothful but efficient master.

Mackeller's medical examination at Nauheim resulted in his being ordered into a private sanatorium, where communication even with friends was forbidden, and Stranleigh felt a qualm of meanness at the relief caused by this announcement.

There was much to interest a stranger in Bad-Nauheim. At first sight it seemed exclusively the stamping-ground of the rich, for its new bathing-houses were models of modern convenience and luxury, while comfortable hotels, lavishness in well-laid-out parks, and the general expensiveness of its Parisian shops marked it as a resort of the wealthy. Soon, however, the young nobleman learned that great reductions were made to people whose income was less than two thousand five hundred marks a year, and that the Bath Direction, in extreme cases, remitted the fees altogether.

Lord Stranleigh's mind being turned in the direction of finding some means to do good with his money, other than by the haphazard charity in which he was accustomed to indulge, he found himself confronted by an obstacle seemingly insurmountable. He felt a reluctance he could not overcome in approaching a person evidently poor, and scraping acquaintance with him. Such an action on his part seemed impudent, indelicate, an unwarrantable intrusion. He was therefore deeply gratified when a man in undoubtedly low financial condition made the first advance.

He had frequently observed this man, and wondered why he was poor, for his face was keen and vulpine, a countenance that betokened power, if ever a countenance is any index to character. The eyes, however, were dull and expressionless, and Stranleigh thought that, in spite of the masterful face, they betokened a vacant mind. But once he caught them fastened on himself with such intensity that it almost made him shiver.

"That man's an anarchist," he said to himself. But the explanation came immediately.

"I beg your pardon," said the stranger, "but have you finished with that newspaper in your pocket ?"

"Oh, quite," said Stranleigh, "and you are very welcome to it."

"I only want a glance at the news. I'll give it back to you in a minute."

"I take only a glance at the news myself," replied Stranleigh, "so I don't wish it returned, if you will be good enough to accept it."

"You are very kind. The truth is, I can't afford to buy a paper in this town. I can get better dailies where I come from for a cent, and here they charge four to six times that much."

Stranleigh sat down beside him on the bench. They were in the Parkstrasse, with many passers-by going up to the afternoon concert at the Kurhaus. The person who could not afford a newspaper showed great familiarity with the one presented to him. He scanned its columns with lightning rapidity, then folded it up and handed it back. For a moment it seemed to Stranleigh that his threadbare acquaintance was already aware of the journal's contents, and had made his request merely as an opening for conversation.

"I am not well enough dressed," he said, when Stranleigh proposed they should go to the concert together, "to mix with you swells on the terrace ; and though I understand the music is good, I don't care much for music."

"I'm no swell," said the younger man with a laugh, "and I've just invited you to come there with me."

"No swell !" cried the other. "Why, I heard a person who spoke English say, as he pointed you out, that you were Lord Stranleigh, and he added you were the richest man in Europe."

"Oh, I don't know about the richest, but my name happens to be Stranleigh."

"I didn't believe about the richest myself. If a man has a little money, people always

call him a millionaire, and generally he isn't. But their calling you a lord interested me. I'd never seen a real live lord. I thought they didn't talk to ordinary folks."

"My fault," confessed Stranleigh, "lies rather in the opposite direction. I'm so anxious to talk to people that I sometimes find a difficulty in getting them to talk to me."

"Well, I resolved to make a move toward you, and then, when I got back home, I'd tell them that I'd talked with a genuine lord."

"Where is 'back home'?" asked Stranleigh.

"I guess I'd better introduce myself, as one good turn deserves another. My name's J. W. Garner. I'm clerk in a railway freight house in Beloit, Wisconsin."

"Is that a remunerative occupation?"

"I can't say that it is, although I live fairly comfortable, and make enough money to come over here without asking anybody's help, and take the treatment without going on the pauper's list. Still, it isn't in a freight house that big money is made in the railway business. Some chap on Wall Street, who never saw the railroad, will make more money on it in ten minutes than we clerks can in forty years."

"Yes, or lose it," said Stranleigh.

"Certainly he runs that risk, but those chaps on the inside don't lose anything. E. L. Bannerdale, for instance."

"Curiously enough," replied Stranleigh, "I was just thinking of him. A great deal depends on the point of view in this world, and it occurred to me how much more lucky you were than Bannerdale."

"Pshaw!" cried Garner impatiently. "Bannerdale must be worth sixty million, if he's worth a cent."

"I dare say, but look at the unhappy man's position at the present moment. He has taken a house in Vienna that occupies a city square, and, to keep the reporters away, has garrisoned it as if it were a fortress. Everyone knows he is stricken with a dangerous disease, and has come to Vienna for treatment, and we all are aware that a man in his condition needs quiet and rest, yet quiet is the one thing he can't buy. Stocks fluctuate up and down according to the rumours coming from that house of death, as it probably is, for he has been reported dead several times, and reported convalescent, and reported incurable. Nobody really knows what his condition is except his physician. But to torture a very sick man in this way seems to me abominable."

J. W. Garner shrugged his shoulders indifferently.

"They've got to have the news," he said, "and, anyhow, I guess there ain't much sympathy for old Bannerdale in the States. He looted too many people when he was well, and I expect there's a feeling of relief now that he's deadly ill. After all, I don't believe his death will make very much difference. He's sure to have things fixed up so that if he pegs out, affairs will go on pretty much as usual. He's an important man, I admit, but he's only one of a group, and the group won't let things go to smash."

"Why," said Stranleigh, "the very paper I handed to you just now says that his most intimate friends have turned traitors, and, believing he cannot recover, are buying or selling, or doing something they shouldn't do."

Garner laughed harshly.

"Then Heaven pity them," he said, "if old Bannerdale gets well!"

"Doesn't the career of a man like Bannerdale create dissatisfaction and arouse envy among the less fortunate of his fellow-citizens?"

"Oh, I don't know. I guess not much. I never felt envious of anybody, because I knew, if I got a chance, I'd do the same thing."

"You never had the chance, then?"

"Oh, I have had thousands of chances. In one way or another I secured information that would have made my fortune had I possessed the money to buy at the proper time. That would have made dozens of fortunes with one rich man to back me."

"Did you ever try persuading the rich man?"

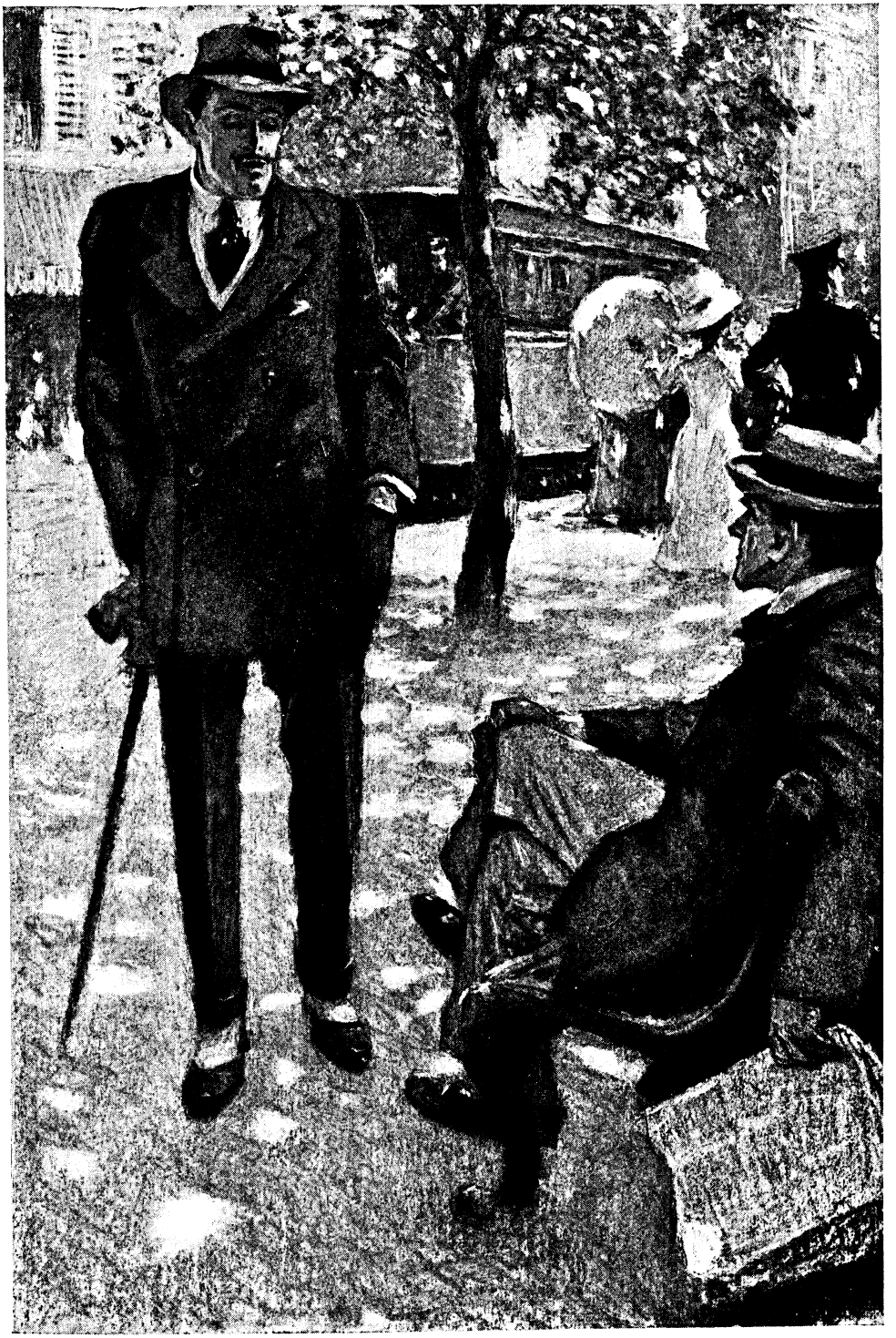
"Heaven bless you, yes, but the difficulty is to get the start. Nobody will listen unless you've put through a deal that's been successful. You see, everybody's singing the same song. You can't meet a man who won't agree to make you rich if you'll just grub-stake him with a few thousand dollars."

"Have you given up hope of finding your rich man?"

"No, I'm at it just now. That's why I scraped acquaintance with you."

"All right, Mr. Garner. You've got me persuaded, so here's your chance at last, with a man who doesn't care a rap whether he wins or loses."

"Well, sir, that's the kind of man I'd like to do business with. I should hate to lose money for anybody, just as I'd hate to lose it myself, if I had some. Now, what I



"'Very good, Mr. Garner. Tell me exactly what to do.'"

wanted that paper of yours for was to see whether the stock of the Great South-Western Short Line had gone up or not. Instead of going up, it's dropped down. If I had money, I'd put every cent of it in that road."

"Do you mind telling me why?"

"Oh, you want to back out!"

"I never back out. I'll give you the money now, if you're in doubt. How much do you want? A hundred pounds or a thousand?"

"Well, I guess I don't want any money at all, but I'd like you to take as much stock as you care to handle, and just hold it for a week or two. If my tip isn't any good, then you don't owe me anything. If it is good, I'm content to take whatever you think it worth."

"Well, if you would trust me that far, it's funny you won't tell me why you expect this stock to rise."

"I don't mind telling you, but if I were you, I wouldn't talk about it. This is the road that Bannerdale nearly had possession of at the time he broke down, and his doctors told him to go to Europe and quit business entirely. He must have absolute rest, they said. All right. He goes and barricades himself up; then his partners, thinking he isn't going to get well, begin to sell, and the stock goes down. Now, Bannerdale held an option on the majority of that stock—an option that doesn't expire for another month. He depended on certain banks and trust companies and financial friends to get him the money, but the moment exaggerating newspapers said that Bannerdale was a dying man, they all deserted him, and he couldn't get a cent. When he actually left for Europe, all Bannerdale stocks dropped six points, and they've been going down ever since, especially when it became known his partners were selling. Now, I believe Bannerdale will get hold of that road, sick or well."

"You're betting, then, on Bannerdale's life or death?"

"Exactly."

"You think he is going to live?"

"I do. He's a tough nut, is old Bannerdale."

Stranleigh rose to his feet.

"Very good, Mr. Garner. Tell me exactly what to do."

"You see that place opposite?" said Garner, pointing to a broker's office on the business side of Parkstrasse. "You go over there, and tell them to put you on to the chief office in Frankfort by telephone. Buy as much stock of the Great South-Western Short Line as you care to carry."

"Shall I do this in my own name or in yours?"

"In your own name, of course. You'll be giving them a cheque for the amount. Besides, as I said, I'm quite willing to take whatever you allow me, and we don't need any documents about it."

"Right," said Stranleigh. "Here is my address, and whenever you wish me to sell, drop in on me and give the order. Good afternoon."

Nearly a week passed, but Stranleigh saw nothing of his dilapidated client. He began to wonder whether the man was a swindler of some sort, but for the life of him he could not see how Garner was to make any money out of the deal Stranleigh had put through in his own name. Enlightenment came to him one morning at breakfast, when he opened the Paris *New York Mercury*. The headlines were sufficient, and ran as follows:—

GREATEST COUP OF MODERN TIMES.

BANNERDALE HAS NEVER BEEN IN VIENNA AT ALL, AND THE REPORTERS HAVE BESIEGED AN EMPTY HOUSE.

LORD STRANLEIGH, ENGLAND'S MULTI-MILLIONAIRE, COMES TO BAD-NAUHEIM IN HIS SPECIAL CAR TO MEET BANNERDALE, WHO IS IN DISGUISE.

STRANLEIGH WILLING TO BACK BANNERDALE WITH A HUNDRED MILLION POUNDS IN HARD CASH IF NECESSARY.

Panic and ruin among the anti-Bannerdales. . . . Great South-Western Short Line stock jumps thirty-three points. . . . Cable kept red hot offering Bannerdale unlimited capital, but he isn't taking any. . . . Believed in Wall Street that his illness was a bluff. . . . Wall Street says cardiac trouble impossible, because Bannerdale *has* no heart.

THE HAZARD.

By KATHERINE CECIL THURSTON,

Author of "John Chilcote, M.P.," "The Fly on the Wheel," "Max," etc.

IT happened over a hundred years ago, in the days before neurotics had become the fashion, when men drank deep and feelings ran high, when a hat was cocked and a snuff-box shut with the same engaging flourish that was bestowed upon the drawing of a sword, and when ladies hid their thoughts behind their blushes, and yielded up their kisses to a suitor much in the same manner as they parted with their purses to a highway robber.

The first scenes of the drama were played in the town of Dublin, which in those days flaunted it with the best among the capitals of Europe, and offered a fitting background against which to view a vivid picture. The moment of enactment was a day in late December, when the old year was dying to a requiem of singing wind, while the new year knocked upon the city gates in a brisk impatience that caused the lazy and feeble to draw closer round the fire, and spurred the young and venturesome to wrap themselves to the eyes and fare forth with stirring blood into the grey afternoon.

But in one house of the winter-bound town there were two who yielded neither to the charms of fireside nor of street—two men, both young and well-looking, who sat in the curve of a bow-window overlooking the Mall, dicing at an oval card-table, the worn baize of which gave evidence of many a gambling bout. The room in which they sat was long and lofty, the fire at the further end, assisting the wintry daylight, rested warmly upon much fine carving, much rich, if faded, drapery; but neither man paid pleased attention to his surroundings—or his companion. The place had been their town house since childhood, as it had been their father's and grandfather's in the generations dead, and in the matter of company they were brothers; and brothers, unless bound by the seldom-present tie that makes for uncommon love, are wont to look askance upon each other.

Pleasant figures enough they were, as they sat each in his characteristic attitude—Roger, the elder, a beau of six-and-twenty, with a tall and strong-knit figure, sanguine colouring, and thick red hair tied into a queue guiltless of powder; Patrick, the younger, finer of feature, lighter of build, totally unlike his brother save for a certain flash of eye, a certain spirited curving of the lip that proclaimed them kin. Pleasant figures enough—Roger, in his cherry-coloured coat, the Irishman all over, a bit of a rake, a bit of a ruffler. Patrick, with his buff-coloured brocade, his patches, his lightly-powdered hair, typifying to a strange degree the high meaning of his name.

For half an hour they continued their somewhat desultory play, then, with an impatient gesture, Roger pushed the dice-box from him and turned to the heavily cut decanter that stood beside his elbow. When he moved, a flash of firelight caught the rose colour of his sleeve and the rich red of the port with which he filled his glass.

"To better fortune!" he said, tossing off the wine. "The devil's in the dice to-day. What is it you've stripped me of? The box of Spanish coins—the red mare—the picture of King James? A plague on it! You'll be robbing me of Glentrale itself!"

Patrick laughed, drew out his snuff-box in the leisurely way he affected on occasion, and elaborately took snuff.

"Glentrale!" he said. "I wouldn't hold Glentrale at a gift!"

"'Twas good enough for your father."

Patrick replaced his box and flicked imaginary grains of snuff from his lace ruffles.

"Faith, Roger, your implication is not flattering! Does any self-respecting gentleman believe that what was good enough for his father is good enough for himself?"

He appreciated the falsity of his words as vividly, perhaps more vividly than did his listener, but he spoke them with an irritating

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deliberation—the same well-bred deliberation with which he had taken snuff and dusted his laces. Emotions are like tones in music. The violin cries the same note as the cornet, but with a world of difference. Long-smouldering hate lay behind Patrick's considered manners, as it lay behind Roger's impetuous gestures. On that winter day each, after his own fashion, was ripe for violent happenings.

For a time they sat, avoiding each other's eyes, Roger fingering his empty glass, Patrick toying absently with the dice-box. Presently the dice rattled out upon the table, recording the minimum score.

"Ah," murmured Patrick, "the devil, it seems, has bethought him of a livelier pursuit! Fortune has turned. Take your revenge, Roger! I'll dice you for the coins, King James, and the red mare together. How take you that for a gallant offer?"

Roger rose, a certain truculence in his movements, a deeper colour than usual on his healthy cheek.

"I take it as a plaguy piece of insolence from a younger brother to an elder!" He turned to the window—a fine figure against the grey day without. "You are over-ready with your phrases. For myself, I ever preferred deeds to words."

Patrick laughed, but the quick colour swept his face, and, dying out, left it paler than before. "Deeds!" he said. "An' it came to deeds, I doubt you'd be readier than I. For all that one of us is red and the other brown, I fear we had the same father."

Roger glanced round. "Our father was the finest swordsman in the three counties."

"And the finest brawler! Heaven be thanked, I favour my mother!"

What hot retort this might have drawn forth one dare not say, but at that moment Roger, at the window, let fall a glance into the street below, and Patrick, at the table, saw his figure stiffen, his face lean towards the glass in sudden haste. Moved by a compelling instinct, he rose and himself came forward into the light.

"What piques your interest, brother?" he asked, striving to keep his tone indifferent. "Have the new mummers come to town? Or are the soldiery at their tricks again?" He came to the window, half ironical, half aflame; then, without warning, his own body stiffened in a held interest, his own eyes gazed through the window.

Below them, against the grey stones of the Mall, where carriages and carts moved between the leafless trees, where hawkers, ballad-mongers, and beggars rubbed shoulders with the young bloods of the town, was the sight that drew both their eyes—caught their dual glances and held them as needles to the magnet—the vision of a young, slim girl, clad in tones of grey and blue, carrying a great fur muff, moving in and out amongst the throng with a youthful curiosity, a youthful harmonious grace, attractive to behold.

Her head upheld, a pleased daring quickening her steps, the girl came on, followed by an older lady, whose round person and bright eyes reminded the beholder absurdly of a robin hopping upon a lawn.

"On my word, 'tis Mistress Bridget and her aunt!" escaped from Roger's lips. "A plaguy silly act, too, leaving their chairs to walk among the rabble, an' the town alive with cut-purses and rufflers!" Inadvertently he jostled Patrick as he leaned nearer to the glass.

As though the movement had caught the glancing eye of the lady in the blue-grey cloak, she looked up, the great muff pressed close against her heart in a pretty suggestion of self-defence, her young face a divine, confused rose colour above its fur tippet, and a bewitching smile, coy yet challenging, sped from her eyes to her lips.

In the window above her, Roger bowed; Patrick, by his side, also bowed; then, as the lady and her duenna passed out of sight, they turned, confronting each other, the one grown very red, the other white and curiously cold.

Roger was the first to speak.

"You are as ready with your bows as with your words!"

"The lady saluted me."

"Me, sir, by your leave!"

"By yours, Roger, the bow was mine. 'Twould be a scurvy gentleman would ignore a lady's greeting."

Their looks crossed, as only swords and glances can cross. The thought that had burned in both their hearts for near a year was kindled to a flame. The consuming jealousy that had kept each the other's watch-dog the season through—exiling Patrick from the loved seclusion of Rossagh, his mother's bequest, keeping Roger from the hunting country of Glentrale, his paternal heritage—was alive and dangerous.

"The lady favoured me, brother!" With a stormy movement, Roger struck the card-table.

Patrick shrugged his shoulders. "Ladies'

favours are proverbially illusive, but—the bow was mine."

There was conviction in the tone. To Roger, hot of head, quick of quarrel, there was taunt insufferable in the cold certainty. Turning from the table, he strode to the end of the room and stopped before the blazing fire.

"I was loath to speak before to-day, Patrick," he blurted forth, "holding in most respect the man who lets his own affairs suffice, and meddles not with his neighbour's. But now, to-day, I am of a changed mind. I would have you know that Mistress Bridget Carden is the lady of my choice—whom I purpose to make my wife."

The words came forth pell-mell. There was a pause, during which Roger waited, breathing hard. Then again he spoke.

"Have you nought to say?"

Slowly Patrick came down the room. His pulses were beating, his blood coursing in his veins with a strange intoxication that conjured to life a hundred memories of childish hate and long-passed quarrels. Forgetful now of his outward seeming, heedless whether his manners gave pleasure or offence, he drew into the light of the fire.

"I have this to say, Roger," he made answer—"that I entertain the same idea regarding the lady of whom you speak!"

Roger stared, then laughed a loud, strident laugh.

"You! You, with your books and trinkets—your manners and your wench's face!"

Patrick flushed and paled.

"Books and manners are as like to please a lady as hounds and horses, an' the wind blows from the right quarter."

Roger smote the carved mantelpiece, making two new pistols that lay upon it jump to his violence. "Phrases!" he cried out. "Phrases! I've had enough of phrasing! Plain talk is what I crave—plain talk from man to man!"

Patrick smiled, and in the firelight his lips had an odd twist.

"We are wont to crave that at which we excel!" he said with irony. Then, quick as a rapier might leave its sheath, his rage leaped forth in a vehemence that outran his brother's. "Plain words, is it? You'll not find me wanting, whether the matter be plain words or plain swords! We've played enough at hide-and-seek—both in the lady's pocket the cursed autumn through, and neither the more aware of the stuff whereof it's made!" He stopped, his eyes flashing, his nostrils quivering, his whole fine self aflame. "Say your say, brother! I'm your man!"

Roger stared at him, sobered for the instant by the unlooked-for outbreak. Then his eyes also fired, his passion blazed.

"What means your insolence?" he cried. "What means your talk of 'pockets'? The case is clear reading. I saw the lady nigh a year ago; I have pressed my suit like an honest gentleman."

"An' I mine."

"Oh, I grant you that!" Roger borrowed his brother's satire. "There have been plaguy few occasions to woo but your pale face has been there to mar them."

"And where we both have been, Roger, there has been Mistress Bridget, all smiles, all blushes——"

"For me, sir, not for you!"

"For me too, brother—that's the devil of it!"

"Take care, sir!"

Roger's hand was raised; Patrick thrust it aside.

"Take you care! Let me not forget you are my mother's son!"

They looked each other in the eyes—two men with hearts full charged.

"Hear me, Roger!" cried Patrick. "I love the lady, and will have her. Mayhap, I am a younger son, but I am of my brother's stock. I have as straight a figure and as deft a sword-arm. An', for the rest, I challenge any to call Rossagh a less fair property than Glentrale."

"You love the lady?" Roger strove in vain to master the angry quivering of his voice; in vain he strove to master the trembling of his body by toying with one of the new pistols on the mantel. "You love the lady?"

"Aye, I love her!"

Then he broke bounds.

"An' am I to play second?" He struck the carved woodwork of the fireplace, not with his clenched hand this time, but with the unprimed weapon. "Am I to bow and scrape and stand aside, like some cringing lackey? Zounds, sir, you mistake me!"

"Nay, brother, I mistake not!"

"You have pondered this matter, then?" The pistol shook in Roger's hand, his ruddy face had the dark hue of rage.

"Pondered it? Seen it, rather! For a six-month and more we have pestered the lady, and the lady has been coy. She has blown hot and cold as the whim took her, till now it seems"—his eyes did not flinch, but his

voice shook, as though he spoke a thought long repressed—"till now it seems that we embarrass her with too lavish a display of gallantry. Two scions of the one house! Think you, brother, is it not too many for a maid's consideration?"

"What mean you?" There was a new sobriety in Roger's tone; the hand that held the firearm was suddenly still.

"What I say, brother! Are not two Trales of Glentrale overmuch for one slim Mistress Carden? Now, were there no young foppish brother to bow his way into wrong places, Master Roger Trale would doubtless cut a straight way to the altar; an' were there no Master Roger, with his hunting crop and pink coat, as like as not——"

"Enough!" thundered the other. "What means all this? Out with it! Out with it, like a man!"

"Like a man, good Roger!" Patrick faced his brother, very straight and slight, very pale in the light of the fire-flames. Purpose was in his dark eyes, purpose in his set lips. "There's an end needed to our case, an' I for one am for it! From youth up I have cumbered the earth in your sight, an', to speak truth, it's been none the richer in mine for your existing. Now that we're men grown——"

"I take you!" Roger's voice was hot again. "I take you! An' you are for it, so am I! The moorland behind Glentrale—a quiet dawn—a couple of these ugly devils——" He looked at the pistol in his hand. "I'm with you! A dose of lead for the loser, the lady for him who lives to drink his coffee! 'Tis a gentlemanlike way of settling a long score!"

Patrick waited until the last word of the tirade was uttered, then his voice, once more cold and clear, broke across it. "You take me, brother, yet do not take me! I'm not for murdering you in dusk or dawn."

"You fear, then? I thought your words had too hot a savour!"

"Digest them and discover."

"What mean you?" On Roger's face was an odd distrust. "Two Trales are overmuch for one Carden, say you? What better, then, to balance the numbers than a brace of these?" He held out the pistol.

Patrick touched the barrel, his glance hard fixed upon his brother's.

"So excellent for the purpose, Roger," he said, "that one will suffice!"

There was silence in the quiet room—a silence so intense that the street cries forced a way through the shut window, and the hiss of the turf in the open fireplace became audible and of import.

Then at last Roger spoke.

"What mean you?" he said once more, but huskily and unlike himself.

"What mean I? This, brother. A duel of a cleaner sort than you have dreamt of!" Patrick wheeled about, and before his listener could draw breath for speech, was at the card-table again, the dice-box in his hand. "We have gamed ere this, Roger, for high stakes."

"Gamed?"

"Aye! We have played for big stakes ere now; but men have played for bigger than ever we wagered. Men have been known to dice for the women they loved."

"Stop, man! I'll not hear her name blasphemed."

"Blasphemed? I'd slit the throat of any who dared speak her name! There's no blasphemy in this. 'Tisn't for love I'd play you, but for life." His voice dropped from heat to soberness, the tone of it penetrating to the hearer's soul.

"What devil's trick is this?"

"Trick?" Patrick blazed again. "Where's your imagination—where your wits? You'd stand upon a pestilential moor, with day a-shivering on the hill-top——"

"I'd face you, man to man."

"Tush!" Patrick threw down the dice-box. "Tush! Face me here and now—the pleasantness of life about us, the gods themselves to secure fair play! Come!" He picked up the box with a gallant air. "Come! Who wins is heir to life, who loses is death's inheritor! The odds are balanced—as nice an apportioning of things as we poor mortals can contrive. Come, brother! Prove your spirit!"

But Roger stood his ground.

"I like it not."

Patrick, very pale, strung to high tension, looked at him and laughed—the old cool, ironic laugh.

"Afraid?" he asked very low.

The taunt worked. The pistol was flung down. Roger strode to the table.

"No man shall propound that question twice! Give me the dice! The one who wins takes all, the one who loses takes——"

"His own life inside three days!"

"Inside three days? So be it. Give me the dice-box!"

But Patrick forestalled him.

"Nay, I cast first!" He laid one dice aside, and let the other fall into its place, then he straightened himself, lifted his head,

and with the little unconscious swagger belonging to his time, shook the box and made his throw.

"A three!"

"A three!"

Patrick took out his lace handkerchief. "A three!" he said again, with elaborate indifference. "The mid-hazard. Fate intends to have her fill of pleasurable suspense."

But Roger pushed past him, snatching the dice-box from his hand. His hot face, his haste, the shortness of his breath, all told his state, but he blustered through the moment as beseemed a gentleman. He shook the box, lifted his head, slashed the dice down upon the table.

It was the crucial moment. Rivalry was forgotten in the wild suspense beating in both hearts.

The dice rolled and settled. Patrick leaned over his brother's shoulder—leaned and peered—then straightened his body slowly.

But Roger, too, had bent and peered; Roger, too, had stiffened himself. Meeting Patrick's eyes, Patrick's sudden stricken look, he laughed aloud.

"Fate is blind, brother, is she not? Or is it justice? Methinks I have forgot!" And again he laughed—a mocking, boisterous laugh that pained the ear.



"The dice rolled and settled."

II.

In the spacious hall of Sir Richard Carden's house, situate in one of the oldest Dublin squares, guests were fast arriving. In the little gallery at the end of the long ballroom the musicians were tuning their fiddles; in the ballroom itself the lackeys were setting tapers to the last group of wax candles; while upstairs, in one of the many bedrooms, Mistress Bridget Carden was standing before an oval mirror, near the door of the powdering closet, while a breathless maid put the last touches to her toilet.

Even at this period of an advancing world, there is interest in viewing a lady in the holy of holies, where she prepares herself for her daily encounters with chance and circumstance. How much deeper was that interest one or two hundred years ago, when woman's

highest accomplishment was the hiding of herself!

Mistress Bridget, seventeen years old, tall and slender, gazing into the dark glass, was a different creature from the girl who had hidden smiles and blushes behind a great muff as she stole glances at two young gallants in their window above the Mall six hours previous. Her colour was still high, but now it was steady, her eyes shone with a secret expectancy, her gestures were decisive, even imperious, as she urged the maid to the performance of her tasks.

"Quickly, Ann—quickly!" she insisted. "I can picture my aunt's chagrin as she stands receiving the guests, her eye ever on the card-room door, her tongue atuning itself to some rare sharp speeches! And, truth to say, she's not unjustified. It's over late even for me. Quickly, Ann—quickly! That curl will suffice. I like a curl riotous now and then. We're all too decorous, dared we but say it!" She picked up a hand mirror and flashed a sharp look at her waiting-woman, a wench scarce a year older than herself, who had been brought to town for her mistress's first season. "What think you, Ann?" she asked. "What think you of this world of brocades and bowings? Long you never for some deed-doing such as men enjoy?"

Ann curtsied in her country way.

"Indeed, ma'am, I know not," she said, abashed.

Mistress Bridget looked at herself, laid down the mirror, sighed. "There are times, good Ann," she said, "when my own soft ways do plague me—when I scorn the graces bred in me, and fain would have some urgent circumstance come flaunting down my path."

"La, ma'am!" said Ann, surprise ousting the shyness from her round eyes.

"'Fie on me!' you would say." Mistress Bridget laughed. "And why, good honest Ann? Why must I be mum if I am discontent?"

"Ma'am, you are a belle—a toast!"

"A toast, forsooth! A broomstick with a petticoat might find itself a toast these days! The men need some excusing for their cups."

"Some men, ma'am!" Ann dared.

Mistress Bridget blushed and frowned.

"Give me my fan, girl," she said. "Methinks my aunt will scarce forgive my tardiness." She took her fan and her lace handkerchief from the timid hands of Ann, then, womanlike, she put a question that seemed irrelevant.

"Saw you your swain to-day, Ann?"

It was Ann's turn to colour, and the two made a pretty picture of youth and the tumults of youth as they stood together in the old panelled room—the maid in her short russet dress, apple-cheeked, with innocent, round eyes, the mistress in a gown of silvery taffeta, a vision of fresh loveliness from her crown of powdered hair to her satin slippers.

"Two hours back, ma'am, he came upon an errand to Sir Richard."

"And contrived a half-hour with you, I'll warrant me, while my father composed his reply! Whose was the message, know you—Master Roger Trale's or Master Patrick's?"

"I know not, ma'am. Rory's head was full of other doings."

"What doings?"

Ann bobbed again in her country fashion. "Oh, ma'am, I scarce dare say. Rory was all for silence."

"Oh, an' that's the case——"

With a sweep of her skirts, Mistress Bridget was across the room, little Ann, fearful and pleading, following hot upon her heels.

"Wait, ma'am! Wait, I pray you!"

But Mistress Bridget swept haughtily on.

"'Twas a quarrel, ma'am, between the two gentlemen. The noise of it reached Rory as he stood in Master Patrick's chamber, polishing his paste breeches-buckles for to-night's ball."

"A quarrel?" With her hand upon the door, Mistress Bridget turned. A quarrel was a quarrel a hundred years ago.

"Oh, ma'am, yes! It did not truly reach Rory, but so raised were the voices that a word or two came through the parlour wall, thick though it be; and, ma'am, he—he heard your name!"

Fearful of vexing her mistress, yet fearful that she had ventured too far, Ann stopped; and Mistress Bridget, with cheeks damask red from shame and some other emotion, opened the bedroom door, looking back from the threshold to repudiate the confidence she had compelled in a manner altogether human and compatible with her sex.

"Enough, girl!" she said. "And look to it, for the future, that you handle my name more circumspectly in your speech with grooms and body-servants!"

The glow of candle-light came up softly from the hall, the faint scraping of fiddles wooed the feet, as Mistress Bridget came out upon the landing, leaving poor Ann, her

little red hand upon her heart, her round eyes brimming with distressful tears. But she heeded neither what lay before her nor behind—she was filled with a strange foreboding. Her own heart, beneath its stiff bodice, was beating fast, her own white hand was tempted to still its flutterings. But Mistress Bridget Carden was irreproachably bred. Her manner was the perfection of decorum as she approached the stair; she carried herself as became a young woman of quality, and held handkerchief and fan with the true degree of elegant carelessness.

At the head of the grand staircase she gave herself a moment's grace in which to observe the scene below her, and worthy of observation the scene was. In the outer hall, standing open to the street, powdered ladies were stepping from sedan chairs; in the inner hall, lackeys were conducting a seemingly unending company towards the card-room, where Sir Richard and his sister were receiving their guests. Life, laughter, colour, came up to the watching girl in a radiant atmosphere—an atmosphere so vivid, so suggestive, that when a step approached from the other end of the long corridor, and a figure paused beside her, she started as though a shadow had fallen across a brilliant light.

She started, looked round, then instinctively ran the gamut of blush and smile and frown that had been taught her from her childhood, as it had been taught her to play upon the harpsichord, to fashion pictures in silk and wool, and to write exercises in the French language in a wonderful handwriting of curves and flourishes.

"Master Patrick!" She swept a curtsey that would have done credit to a foreign court.

"Mistress Bridget!" Patrick, with his hand upon his heart, his feet decorously together, bowed so low that for an instant only the crown of his powdered head was visible. Then he stood erect again, and in the tell-tale candle-light the lady saw that which caught her breath and made her blood go cold. His face was of an untoward paleness above his peach-coloured coat and lace ruffles, his dark eyes were haggard as she had never seen man's eyes in all her short life. The sight of suffering, the sight of fear, in a human face is more potent than any cry for aid. The coquette in Mistress Bridget Carden fled before the woman in that instant of comprehension. Her hand went out to Patrick, her little painted fan fell to the floor.

"What is amiss?" she cried. "You look more like a spectre than a living creature! What is amiss?"

She spoke from her soul, and her soul shone in her eyes. For one instant Patrick looked into it hungrily, then he made one of his indifferent gestures, stooped, picked up the fan, and returned it with a bow.

"A pretty toy," he said, "deserving of more careful handling. As to my looks, Mistress Bridget, I fear me a bout with the dice must be held responsible for them. I am regretful to play the ghost at Sir Richard's feast; but if my eyes be dull, yours shine for the two of us." He bowed again and laughed.

The laugh was forced, but Mistress Bridget took no heed of tones. She flushed scarlet and bit her lip.

"I thank you, sir, but pretty speeches are for me to-night. I should even now be with my father in the card-room, flattering his guests."

Patrick elaborately offered his arm. "Will you pleasure me so far as to permit me to conduct you thither?"

But it was Mistress Bridget's moment for the indulgence of revenge.

"I am vastly obliged, sir"—she paused and, with an indifference equalling his own, peered over the banister into the hall, crowded with brocaded coats, brocaded skirts—"but I fear the card-room must lack me a little longer. I see your brother Roger below us. I am promised to him for the first country dance, and would be loth to lose so proper a partner."

She glanced up, glanced down, giving her dart time to speed home; then, light as a swallow, she was away down the broad stairs, leaving Patrick to his dark thoughts on the deserted landing.

At the foot of the stairs, Roger Trale was standing alone, glancing round him with a reckless eye. He made a notable figure in his blue coat, his dark red hair tied with a broad black ribbon, his jewels and laces for once as extravagant as his brother's. But that something had perturbed him was obvious at a glance, and that he had sought material consolation was also to be seen. The heat of wine was in his eye and on his cheek, the daring born of wine was near his tongue, as his roving gaze, lifting suddenly, caught Mistress Bridget skimming down the shallow steps.

"Whither away?" He came forward, and, with a courage surprising to himself, laid a detaining hand upon her arm.

Mistress Bridget felt his fingers burn her, longed fiercely to shake them off, but bethought her of Patrick watching at the stair-head, and suffered the clasp—not only suffered it, but looked up straightly into Roger's bold face.

"I might transpose the question, sir. What do you disconsolate in the hall? Has my aunt no damsel for you to foot it with in this country dance that the fiddlers are scraping out?"

Roger answered hoarsely, with his eyes upon her face. "I want no dancing, Mistress Bridget. I stand here for another purpose—a word with you privily, when the favour may be granted."

Another time it would have been Mistress Bridget's cue to blush and smile and frown in the wonted way; but her heart was still burning to her rebuff. Patrick was still, supposedly, at the stair-head.

"I have no wish, neither, to romp it foolishly," she admitted, and her eyes dropped.

Roger bent over her, driven by the wine and his desires.

"Come, then, with me into the Blue Closet," he whispered. "None will frequent so small a chamber on so great a night."

Mistress Bridget hesitated; then, yielding to the importunity of her sore heart, laid her hand upon Roger's arm, and suffered him to lead her through the brilliant company, past the card-room door, down a narrow passage neglected of the guests.

The Blue Closet, apparently so termed because the formal chairs were covered in lavender-hued brocade, was a tiny room upon which the artists, who laboured so lovingly upon the Dublin of that day, had expended some of their rarest skill. The marble mantelpiece was a wonder of delicate carving, the ceiling was a thing to uplift eyes and spirit. Beauty of conception, beauty of achievement, reigned here, as it reigned throughout the whole house, forming a fitting background to the most prized of all Sir Richard Carden's treasures—slim Mistress Bridget.

She entered the room now in the graceful way she brought to all her doings, her head high, her lissom body displaying its sweetness through all the elaboration of stiff raiment. She entered, took her hand from her cavalier's arm, and, walking to the fireplace, waited for him to speak.

Her back was to him in that brief waiting, but her sharp ears heard him close the door, heard him draw a curious deep breath, heard him come quick across the room and pause behind her.

His proximity—the purport of the proximity—assailed her senses in swift fear, but she made no movement of alarm. Instead, she spoke, and her voice was a testimony to her upbringing, so neutral it was, so bereft of any human note.

"And now, sir, your pleasure?" she said, without looking round, her eyes intent upon the wood fire, the toe of one foot upon the fender. "What lack you most? My views upon the four chestnuts you drove so handsomely in Drogheda Street yesterday, or——"

Roger broke hotly in.

"You flout me, Mistress Bridget!"

For an instant she shrank before his vehemence, but her rallying was a neat affair.

"La, Master Roger, but you men are growing as fantastical as the women! I'm sure I meant most civilly. Your four red horses are the envy of the town."

"That may be. But, for me, I say curse all horses, red or black!"

In her surprise, Mistress Bridget turned, and the sight of her face was fuel to Roger's fire.

"Curse all horses!" he cried again. "'Tis nearer things than horses I'm considering. But you know what I'm for saying—you know it well, for all your eyes are innocent as bluebells."

"Sir!"

"You know it! You know this six-month that Patrick and myself are deep in love—neck-deep. You knew it, I'll warrant, before we were aware ourselves. 'Tis a woman's way."

She listened to the outburst, paling only when he spoke his brother's name. Then, when it was done, she answered in a low, untrembling voice.

"Master Roger," she said, "were you other than a Trale, and my father's friend, I had been tempted to fancy that you had drunk too deep."

The cold tone would have quenched him at another moment, but now he was past the girl's cooling. His answer was to place both hands upon her shoulders and force her to meet his eyes.

"Patrick is mad in love with you, and so am I. You have played us—cat and mouse—nigh the year through. But now the cat's game is done; the mice are at each other's throats!" His voice was hoarse, the pressure of his hands cruel; it was the moment,

according to tradition, for Mistress Bridget to cry out, to shrink or faint. But, curious to note, she did none of these things. Some secret inbred courage leaped in her to the challenge. Her eyes flashed as they met Roger's.

"What mean you?" she asked very short and sharp.

"This, Mistress Bridget! Patience is not long-lived in us Trales. To-day my brother and myself saw ours die hard."

"A quarrel?" The words slipped through scarce-parted lips.

"Aye, a quarrel!"

"You fight, then — and for me?"

"Fight!" Roger laughed with harsh irony. "Where live you, Mistress Bridget, to be so old-time and unmodish? Sure, a cut and thrust was good enough for the last generation, but your gentleman of to-day is far too fine for such simple business. You wrong my brother and myself. We diced for you, madam—diced at our own card-table, in our own parlour—the winning man to take the whole, the loser to strip himself even of life inside three days! Oh, you wrong us, to credit us with mere swords and seconds!

"You diced—for your lives?"

"For you," he corrected.

"And who lost? Who lost?"

The words sped from her without volition; but even as they formed themselves, her voice seemed to faint away, her cheek blanched to an overmastering comprehension.

"Patrick lost!" she said, her tone a whisper.

For a full minute there was silence, then Roger spoke in a voice low as her own, hoarse and unsteady.

"One must be loser," he said. "And we are both Trales. No Trale ever shirked death."

"But he cannot die!" cried Mistress Bridget. "We cannot permit his death!"

Roger's eyes had dropped as he spoke his last words, now they lifted and fixed hers in a strange hot glance.

"We need not," he said very low.

Again they stared, then he burst forth anew.

"Mistress Bridget, you know the Trales. Honour is honour, however mad the hazard. The loser of this dice-throw loses life as sure as if the king had ordered his execution!"

"But it's monstrous—monstrous!"

He withdrew his hands from her shoulders, and left her swaying before him, white and helpless, the while he looked at her with covetous glance.

"One thing saves him, Mistress Bridget."

She raised her eyes, dark and wild, and a question leaped at him from their depths.

"An' I can come to him to-morrow morn and say: 'The lady hath forestalled your pistol, brother! I have married a wife!'"

"A wife!"



"'My answer, Biddy?'"

"Aye!" He caught her wrist and pulled her towards him, his being aflame, his love surging in him to the obscuring of all else. "Marry me, Bridget! Marry me to-night! 'Tis that I have come to say—that and nought else. Within the hour two of my red horses will be harnessed to the barouche and waiting nigh the square. We will cover the ground as fast as hoofs can fly, and once at Glentrale the chaplain will make quick work of a marriage service. What say you, Biddy? What say you?" He caught her against his breast, his breath searing her cheek, his heart beating against hers.

And Mistress Bridget, helpless in the fervour of that embrace, was learning life—learning what life may demand and love pay when needs must. No doubt came to her. It was the day of honour—a Trale would pay his honourable debts. She saw Patrick in all his fineness—the high-bred face, the dark eyes that could flash like steel, the lips that could curl to smiles or scorn.

"My answer, Biddy?"

Roger's voice was like whip-cord across her thoughts. She threw back her head and looked at him almost, it seemed to her excited fancy, as Patrick might have looked.

"Wait me an hour from now at the little gate behind the house," she said. "I can slip through unheeded while the supper is being served."

"My queen!" cried Roger, and he bent to her lips.

But with a subtle movement she slipped from his embrace ere he could touch even her cheek, and was gone—a flash of silver—across the quiet room.

III.

THE wind that had all day long blown from the east was still sweeping the town, but now dark drifts of cloud began to lower over the night sky, and a fine snow, dry and sharp as needle-points, drove loiterers homeward, and made link-boys shiver and sedan-chairmen cower into their coat collars as they hung about the entries of great houses.

Near the little door at the back of Sir Richard Carden's, Roger Trale, waiting and watching in the dark, was a prey to prodigious emotion. Half an hour ago he had left the ball, and, returning to the Mall, had fortified his spirit with a fresh measure of wine, and given his body-servant, Rory, food for thought by doffing his finery and arraying himself in the surcoat and heavy boots usual to a journey.

Rory, with the inquisitiveness of his race and class, and by virtue of faithful service, had ventured a comment upon this behaviour. But Roger had cursed him for his pains, the while he armed himself with one of the new pistols from the parlour mantelpiece, and had stalked out of the house without explanation or farewell.

The wine and his passions kept out the cold now, as he paced to and fro in the narrow alley, his eye ever on the door at which Sir Richard's maid-servants were wont to do their dallying, but which, on the evening of a great rout, was left to the silence of the night and the shadow of high walls. The wildness of his impatience was apparent at every turn—in the quick manner of his pacing, the suddenness of his pauses when a gust of wind sang across the roof-tops, or a link-boy, crossing the square, inadvertently sent the light of his torch down the alley's mouth.

Time and again his desire cheated him, then suddenly expectancy became reality. He paused, and now his ears had contrived no delusion—the flutter of a slim hand upon the latch rewarded his eyes.

In a trice he was beside the door, his clasp upon the white fingers, his face bent down to a shadowed figure.

"Brave Biddy! How didst contrive it?"

In the darkness Mistress Bridget raised her head, throwing back her hood, regardless of the stinging pin-points of the snow.

"An' it please you," she said, "take me to the carriage."

It was scarce the greeting of a bride, but man a century ago was an arrogant animal. It occurred not to the mind of Roger Trale to note his mistress's words, much less to note their tone. She was his—his joy, his chattel, his hard-coveted, hard-won possession. What signified it that, being a woman, she should have a touch of the vapours on this, her sudden wedding night? He put his arms about her masterfully.

"Fear not, sweet! The horses chafe to be away."

He drew her with him, a chilled form, insensible to his embrace, and together they passed into the square—he swaggering a little as he guided her, to convey the impression of a gallant out adventuring; she with hood drawn close again, indifferently playing the part of a woman masquerading through the town.

Never once did she speak, never once did she look back at her father's house. Onward she suffered herself to be drawn, until a

disused courtyard yawned before them, and out of its recesses loomed the vision of a great barouche, and, in the flare of a torch, the glimpse of a mysterious postillion and the gleaming flanks of a couple of restive horses.

"Thither, sweet!" Roger's lips were to her ear, his hot voice lowered, as he drew her forward; then suddenly he put forth his great strength and lifted her into the dark carriage.

A confused moment followed—a moment of quick, hissing whispers, champing bits, impatient pawings of the ground — then Roger swung himself into the seat beside her, the door of the barouche was closed, a whip cracked, and they were off.

The drive—surely the oddest ever experienced by eloping couple—was passed without speech. While the horses negotiated the streets, Mistress Bridget sat far back in her shadowed corner, but as the town was left behind, and the animals, scenting the open road, drew into their stride, she sat forward, her shoulder deliberately turned to her bridegroom, her face to the carriage window.

At no season of the year was the road to grim Glentrale a path of beauty; but now, when winter had lashed the hedgerows and nipped the sparse trees, it was indeed a desolate way. Open country of moorlike aspect stretched to right and left; loneliness and lifelessness reigned; not even a scudding rabbit crossed their path.

Not a word spoke Miss Bridget through the long eight miles, not a word Roger until the gates of Glentrale loomed up, gaunt and impressive, with the arms of the Trales half eaten from the stone by time and storm; but there, at last, the hunger in him broke bounds, and he caught her violently to him, while the postillion urged the horses past the dark gatehouse and up the winding drive.

"Welcome home, sweetheart! Pay toll at the gateway!"

Once more his lips were near to hers in the kiss they craved, but with the strength of fear the girl pushed him from her.

"When the priest hath wed us!" she cried. "As yet I am my own!"

"Nay, you are mine!" Roger bent once more.

But the horses plunged at the saving moment; the postillion drew rein dexterously, and they were before the doorway of the grey, forbidding house.

Roger swore beneath his breath, then laughed boisterously at his own discomfiture, and, flinging himself from the carriage, seized upon the bell-handle that depended from a chain above the door.

Mistress Bridget, sitting numb within the carriage, heard the clang of the bell echo through nameless distances; then feet sounded within the house, lights sprang up in the windows, and the heavy door swung open, showing the frightened face of an old retainer.

Roger, offering no greeting to his servant, turned to the barouche, and, lifting the girl bodily, carried her across the threshold. There he set her down, and looked about him at the desolate hall and empty hearth.

"By Heaven," he thundered, "a pretty home-coming! Is this the cheer you keep at Glentrale when I am absent? Bring turf and firewood! Bring fire, I say! Bring food and wine! And be swift about it——"

But the old servant was gone before his words were ended.

To Mistress Bridget, standing inert and frozen by the centre table, vaguely attentive to the storming of her future lord as he walked up and down the hall, it seemed but a moment ere half a dozen servants in various stages of disarray appeared upon the scene, some carrying bucketfuls of blazing turf, some wine and pasties, others candles in heavy silver sconces, and the hall was transformed like a scene upon the stage.

While this atonement was being made, Roger continued to stalk up and down, railing without cessation; then, as the lesser servants withdrew, he turned anew upon the old man who had admitted him.

"Now, Timothy, an' where's his reverence? Snug enough in his own quarters, I'll be bound, while Glentrale goes to rack and ruin! Off with you and rouse him! Rouse him and bring him here. I have work for him to do. The deuce knows he's rusting for it!"

The old servant stared uncertainly. Roger was about to break forth afresh, but Mistress Bridget, coming suddenly to life, threw out her hands beseechingly.

"Roger, a little grace! A little grace, I do entreat you! Give me a space in which to prepare me for this—this sacrament!" In her excitement her hood had fallen back, showing her hair powdered as it had been for the ball, her lovely pale face still wearing its velvet patches, and Roger's anger merged anew to passion.

"Go, call his reverence, Timothy," he said in a changed voice, his eyes upon the girl. "Tell him to wait upon me here within the

hour, and see to it he has his missal with him—dog-eared at the marriage service!" Then, as the old man confusedly withdrew, he came round the spread table to his bride's side.

"Biddy," he said, "beseat yourself. 'Tis your own board. Here's wine. Your lips need warming, and since I may not kiss them——" He laughed excitedly and poured some wine into a glass.

"Seat yourself, sweetheart." He set the glass in front of her and drew up a great chair covered in faded velvet.

But Mistress Bridget did not move. Her dark cloak hung open now, and the shimmer of her gown was like moonlight in the old hall. Her face, too, suggested moonlight, so pale it was and wan.

"Roger," she said suddenly, "we should confess before partaking of a sacrament. I have that upon my conscience I would confess to you."

Roger laughed and leaned over her. "Better to me, sweet, than to the priest. I have no great liking for the cloth, for all my arrogance bids me uphold Rome. Confess away! Your sins are white, I'll warrant!"

But Mistress Bridget neither heard nor heeded. Her eyes were fixed upon his face. "Roger," she broke forth, "I know not if you have questioned my doing of this deed—I know not if you have questioned why I am so fain to save your brother?"

"For humanity's sake, I take it," he said jestingly. "Also, perchance, for another reason." His voice dropped, his arm went round her waist. "A maid likes to be compelled to her own pleasuring. Am I right, Biddy?"

"Pleasuring!" Mistress Bridget spoke the word with so fine an irony that Roger's arm dropped to his side. "Pleasuring, forsooth! I marry you, Roger, because I love Patrick! I would 'twere torturing or killing that might save him; but, since 'tis marrying, then I'll be married!"

The blood rushed into Roger's face.

"You love Patrick?"

"Aye. Wilt take me now—the empty shell, without heart or soul?"

For an instant pride and manhood struck him silent, then love took him by the throat. He caught her again in his embrace, his eyes burning into hers.

"I leave such subtleties as hearts and souls in my brother's keeping. For myself, the shell you speak of, Mistress Biddy, has a monstrous fine colouring——"

This time there was new significance in voice and gesture. Jealousy and passion combined had lashed his love to savagery. Terror brought a cry to Mistress Bridget's lips. Then his passion and her fear were checked upon the instant. By common impulse both turned towards the door—eyes wide, breath suspended. The gallop, the sudden halt of a horse, had broken across the moment like a thunderclap, and hot upon the ensuing pause came the desperate beating of a riding-crop upon the door.

Roger swore, Mistress Bridget gasped.

"What is't?"

"I know not. Your father, as like as not!"

"My father? Impossible! And yet it may be. Perchance my woman missed my cloak and raised a cry. 'Tis a tender, timorous wretch, new from the country."

Her voice was broken by a fresh assault of the riding-crop upon the door.

"Come!" cried Roger. "Come! Hide you an instant behind this tapestry, while I parley with him." Waiting for no answer, he pulled her across the hall.

"An' it be my father, I'll speak with him!" she cried, her spirit returning. But the words were drowned by a fresh shower of blows. Roger's imperious hand forced her into hiding, and the tapestry fell into place, blotting out her vision of the hall.

* * * * *

It was a strange moment to one newly embarked upon the sea of actual living—that moment of sudden darkness. Behind her, Mistress Bridget was aware of the damp coldness of a stone wall; in front, the heavy tapestry assailed her nostrils with the musty scent of unnumbered years. But with the robbing of her sight, her other senses gained to strange acuteness. Standing in that secret place, waiting for what she knew not, an alertness was hers, an intuition unknown in any previous hour.

The insistent blows continued for a moment after her imprisonment; then, plain as though the action were visible to her, she knew that Roger crossed the hall and inhospitably opened the door by a couple of inches. She waited—waited for his voice—for Sir Richard's voice—but neither answered her expectation. The tones that at last broke silence sent the blood back to her heart, and left her limbs so weak and tremulous that she could scarce stand upright in her place.

"Is't you, Timothy?" came in Patrick's voice. "Open, and say if you know aught



"She curtsied low."

of my brother. Open, man! Open! I'm hard pressed!"

She waited, her hand clinging for support to the damp wall behind her. She caught no reply from Roger, but she heard the door open wider, and following on it an odd sound from Patrick—a sound never to be forgotten, a something between a sob and a gasp charged with an immeasurable relief—such a sound as might be wrung from a runner whose race is won.

"Roger!"

Satire might never have lived in Patrick, so human was his tone. To Mistress Bridget, strained and trembling, it seemed that in a strange way it echoed her own new-found kinship with real things. But Roger's reply came prompt, sending all tender thoughts flying.

"Zounds, brother! A timely visit! What brings you to Glentrale in the shades of night, who never cross the threshold in open day? To what may my poor roof-tree attribute this great honour?"

And Patrick, it seemed, had no cut and thrust of words to parry the veiled insult. "I missed you from the rout," he answered plainly. "I sought you at the Mall, to hear from Rory that you had left the house booted and cloaked and—armed with a pistol!"

Roger forced a boisterous laugh. "The devil you did! You're growing strangely conscientious for my affairs!" He paused in a manner that sent Patrick's eyes to the spread table.

"You have company?" he said, disconcerted.

Roger laughed once more, and the laugh brought the blood to Mistress Bridget's cheek, she knew not why.

"Spare your suspicions, brother," he sneered. "I sup with the priest. We all turn religious upon occasion, if only for variety of sensation!"

He was talking fast—almost, it might seem, he was talking against time. To the girl behind the tapestry there was a hint of uneasiness in his bravado, and, by virtue of her new-found intuition, she felt, without seeing it, Patrick's stare of incredulity.

"Roger," she heard him urge, "don't dally with me. Give me a word in earnest. I rode post-haste to find you—to what end you may surmise."

"Not I, faith!" Roger's voice was truculent and a trifle wild. "Not I! Nor am I in a mind for riddles. Look you, Patrick! I'll treat you fair. My conclave with the Church is not begun; the priest will be in upon us as we stand. You've come upon me at a most uncivil hour, but I'll forgive you. Here, pledge me in our grandsire's wine, and begone ere my humour changes!"

The gurgle of poured wine followed, broken in turn by Patrick's voice.

"You are a brave man, Roger. Your words confirm me in my resolve."

"A plague on your resolve! Drink, man! Drink—and go!"

"When I have spoke, Roger."

Roger swore savagely. "When you have spoke! I'll have no speeches, hark ye! We've said all that will be said between us."

"Not all, brother! I've come to speak—and speak I will! This hazard of to-day——"

"Be still!" thundered Roger. "Be still, I say!"

But Patrick would have no silencing.

"This hazard of to-day," he cried out loud and strong—"I'm off with it! I'm off with it! D'you hear?"

Mistress Bridget, listening, felt life ebb from her as she dropped back faint against the wall. Patrick, her hero, her love—Patrick, for whom she was bartering youth, freedom, hope itself—Patrick was a craven, dishonoured, self-betrayed! Sharp across her distraught thoughts Roger's hoarse laugh assailed her hearing.

"I thought till now you were a Trale! No Trale ever waxed mawkish over death—another's or his own!"

"No Trale ever sent his brother to a dishonoured grave!"

"Be silent, fool!" Roger's raised voice held menace and alarm.

But Patrick's answered it full as hot and fierce.

"I'll not be silent! I was mad to-day, but reason came to me in cooler hours. I'll be no coward! I'll be no party to this cursed dice-throw! You're the elder, Roger. Nature's on your side. Take your chances—I'll abide the issue. Woo the lady fairly, without let or hindrance; win her, an' you can——"

He stopped upon the word—stopped and turned like a man struck. Roger also turned, and let fall the glass he held unknowingly in his hand.

The tapestry had been drawn aside; Mistress Bridget had stepped forth, ghost-like with her silver raiment, her white, startled face.

"You played at dice to-day," she said. "Who won the hazard?"

Roger, with a cry, stepped forward, but she waved him back, her wild dark eyes on Patrick.

"Who won the hazard? Speak me fair!"

"'Twas I won, Bridget!" Patrick answered very low.

And Roger cried out again.

"Biddy, hear me!"

"Hear you?" Mistress Bridget blazed. "You, that would wed, to leave your wife a widow? You, that would die content, to know your brother cheated in the last hour?" She stood before them, a silver flame—not ghost-like now, but living, with eyes alight.

To the view of an old priest, entering softly and unheeded in the tumult, she seemed not so much a girl, slim and gracious, as a woman proving herself in some crucial hour.

Closing the door silently, this priest waited a moment, unnoticed by the three, watching the play of emotions; then he spoke in a quiet, comprehending fashion.

"Well, Roger, Timothy tells me you have need of me? I hope I have not come untimely."

All three turned, to see a very old man garbed in rusty black, with white hair and shoulders stooped from study, who looked with a gentle human tolerance from one face to the other, while he turned a shabby prayer-book about between his hands.

He looked at Roger, looked at Patrick, looked again at Mistress Bridget Carden. And something in her young face drew from him a smile, and something in his smile made her step forth, her cheeks crimson, her head high.

"'Tis a runaway match, father," she said bravely, with never a tremor in her voice. "I am daughter to Sir Richard Carden, of the county of Wicklow. I have left his house this night, and would fain be wed with all dispatch—to Master Patrick Trale!"

She blushed still deeper, she curtsied low after the manner taught her; then, with a little laugh that held close resemblance to a sob, her eyes sought Patrick's, her hands were caught in his.

THE SEA'S CALL.

IS it a gull that cries landward—a grey gull crying?
The north wind risen from sleep?
The sound of the sullen surges, in wrath replying,
An angry deep.

Oh, wan, white moon, you shrink, by the clouds affrighted,
The driving storm!
Shall we think, in the tossing spray, of the window lighted,
The fireside warm?

Wind, through the flying foam in the darkness falling,
Blow wild and free!
I hear, through the winter night, the great sea calling—
The great sea calling me!

MARY KERNAHAN HARRIS.

OLD OILY'S.

By LAURENCE NORTH,

Author of "Syrinx."

FOR months the children had not been in London. They had taken to the country very kindly, as children must, and there was wonderfully little sighing for the flesh-pots of Egypt, considering that the imps had spent their first years in Town. But as Christmas drew near, vague hints and half-disguised requests floated through the air of the little world, and one could overhear the names of great and fascinating merchantmen, those lesser kings and magi who come at Yuletide bearing precious things to charm the eternal child.

At last the request grew definite, and a promise was given that the first really fine morning would see us in the train on our way to Marylebone. After that would come the Tube and the London that *is* London, with the fierce delight of taxis whirling you from one Christmas bazaar to another—*au Paradis des Enfants*, as they say yonder, at the corner of the Rue de Rivoli.

But that first fine morning would not come. Dull days with cold damp mists prevailed, and little hearts grew heavier and heavier. At last so short a time remained before the Feast that it seemed as if our expedition would never be undertaken. It was very hard luck, to be sure. Then out of the unexpected came compensation.

The village boasts one or two shops. One of them is a rather dingy oilman's, with windows that resemble a museum of the heterogeneous. For the best—or is it the worst?—part of the year they are filled with a queer collection of household, carpentering and agricultural implements that interest the Boy, who finds there material for his marvellous mechanical devices. Once, in a weak moment, after many cautionary stories—not in Mrs. Turner—an Unwise Parent presented his son with a chisel. The Boy handled it cleverly enough, and no harm came of it as far as his fingers were concerned; but a lady-in-waiting, following the natural bent of womankind, used it as a screw-driver, and there was an end of that adventure. But to our tale.

The oilman, although dingy, is enterprising. The spell of Christmas laid hold on him, and he awoke. The other morning Black Eyes came in thrilling: "Oh, my Daddy, Old Oily is gettin' ready for Christmas, and the shop's full of toys inside!"

During the summer certain dusty and plebeian-looking playthings had languished in a corner of the emporium. They had made no appeal, and I was rather sceptical about the possibilities of Oily's Christmas bazaar. But Black Eyes' story was confirmed by the Boy, who came in with news of a real steam-engine. He has several already, but he can never have enough. I ignored his indelicate hints.

There was some mysterious taking of counsel in a corner of the hall, then the suppliants approached in proper form. I had sat down on the stairs to see what would happen. It was like the opening scene of Oedipus the King.

The suppliants spoke.

"Please may we go down to Oily's in the afternoon to spend some of our money?"

"Your money?"

"Oh, yes, my Daddy darlin'! You know, at the beginning of December, Mummy said if we left nothing lying about, and cleared up all our mess, there would be a penny of Christmas present money for every day she found nothing left about."

"And so, you see," said the Mechanic, "we're pretty flush."

"You're pretty *what?*"

"Rich, you know. Don't you know what 'flush' is, Daddy? Jerry Tubbins——"

"Never mind," I interposed hastily, for Jerry Tubbins is a thorn in my side. He is a chance aquaintance of Boy's, and his discouragement is a most delicate exercise in diplomacy, for I would not make my son a snob. The best argument seems to be that it is difficult to have Jerry in, as his Mummy doesn't know Boy's Mummy. However, at the garden gate, Jerry enlarges our son's views of life and, incidentally, his vocabulary. Parents can only watch and pray.

"Well, then, about those millions? I suppose it must be 'Yes.'"

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"She was standing, a vision of rapture, before a grotesque wooden fish,"

"*There's* a good Daddy!" Black Eyes cooed with soft persuasion no pen can reproduce. Heavens, what will a poor parent do in the day that she begs for a man? So "Yes" it was, and I promised to go with them to Oily's palace of enchantment.

They ate their dinner as well as excitement allowed, and then we set off down the hill. Oily's windows certainly gave little promise, but it would take more than Christmas energy to cleanse that Augean stable. Within, however, Oily was surprisingly glorious.

Tier upon tier, down the centre of the shop, rose a kind of catafalque laden with treasures. True, it was an ordinary sort of toy, for the most part, suitable to the rustic purse, but that was rather pleasing. It is well that the imps should be content with little. That is the portion of most of us in this world. It is wise to begin young.

Oily came forward, beaming. His accents are like his name. He extolled the little man with the milk cart, the tumbling bear, the sixpenny dissected map of the world—"very eddicative"—the Scripture picture blocks—"a nice toy for Sunday afternoon"—but his *pièce de résistance* was the jumping monkey—"most nateral and lifelike"—which he made haste to wind up and set going. It was not a great success. Black Eyes seemed to favour it for a moment, but she drifted away from it to the gaudy dolls in boxes. Boy took a detached interest in Oily's demonstration, but one could see that the corner of his eye was on that steam-engine.

It was painfully cheap, and would most likely blow up. Besides, there were already too many at home. I tried to avoid the dreadful little machine. Why should he desire it, after the beautiful and safe model the doctor gave him?

"And we 'ave," said Oily, "a very superior line in Christmas cards to w'ich I might direck your attention. All very cheap, and them there is 'and-pynted—surprising value."

With a little finesse I contrived to turn the tables on the "'and-pynted" wonders, which threatened to find a market. It was cruel, perhaps, but there are some things one cannot have sent out of the house, even by the infants.

A little shriek of delight from Black Eyes saved the situation. She was standing, a vision of rapture, before a grotesque wooden fish. Below it hung a pendulum. A touch from Oily, the pendulum swung, and the fish opened and shut its mouth and cocked its tail like the proverbial dying duck in a thunderstorm—at least, so one may believe.

"Oh, wee Pegs would love that!" Black Eyes screamed.

The price was within the small person's means, so to Peggy, whose afternoon sleep had kept her from joining the party, the toy was dedicated. Then, after long choosing, Black Eyes found a doll to her mind.

Oily began to brighten up; he had seemed a little fearful of no business. Two minute pistols and ammunition, for wild adventures on the Common, made the next purchase. Then the lady asked a question.

"Please, have you the policeman taking up the Suffragette?"

Alas, Oily had not "stocked" that mechanical political tract! It is some time since Blackie heard of it, but she remembers. I made a note.

Meanwhile, where was that Boy? Except one pistol—a penny—and four boxes of caps—likewise a penny—he was none the better of his afternoon on 'Change. He was hovering restlessly about the corner where that precious engine stood. But I was firm. "Not another engine, Boy."

His face fell, and he seemed to swallow a little. He made another paltry purchase or two, and we said "Good-bye" to Oily, who is, fortunately, another of those who are content with little.

As we came up the hill, the Boy slipped his hand into mine.

"I say, Daddy!"

"Well, Boysie?"

"About that engine. I didn't want it for myself; it was to give to Jerry Tubbins. He hasn't very many things, and he wants a steam-engine awfully."

However great the temptation, I could not be a party to the certain blowing up of the dubious Jerry. "It is quite unsafe, Boy, but I'll bring you a proper one, with a safety valve, from Town, and you can give Jerry that."

"Nice old Daddy!" he said, squeezing my hand.

The next morning, wonder of wonders, dawned in clear frosty sunshine, and we went to London in great state. Boy chose Jerry's engine himself. I grieve, on account of human weakness generally, and my own in particular, to confess that on Christmas morning Boy will find in his stocking a working model of a Great Central locomotive which will cast all his other engines into the shade.

What his mother will say to me I dare not think.

THE CHILDREN'S SEASON.

By JESSIE POPE.

FOR a full six weeks before Christmas the children have been shouting appeals for toys up the chimney, in the fond hope that Santa Claus may be prematurely loitering round the chimney-pots. Mysterious confidences have gone up through that sooty channel, with curly heads down on the hearth—the right side of the guard—and big saucer eyes watching the sparks leap gallantly up the black aperture, down which will come tumbling, on the day of days, a torrent of bicycle horses, dolls'-houses, chocolate-boxes, trains, and Teddy bears—all the things, and more, that the little hearts have longed for all the weary waiting time.



"LAST INSTRUCTIONS TO SANTA CLAUS." BY H. H. FLÈRE.

For months Christmas has appeared on the children's horizon like a star, first a mere pin-point, but increasing steadily in magnitude as the grey days grow shorter and shorter, till at last it fills the world with a glorious burst of radiance on Christmas morning. Every year Christmas preparations seem to start earlier, and every year the festival grows more widespread and popular; and those who shake their heads over it, and say the religious aspect is overshadowed by the secular, will at least admit that the spirit of good-will to all men and charity to the poor grows stronger with each Christmas, and *that*, after all, is the religion taught by the Babe in the Manger.

Little purses are very limp and empty on Christmas Eve, for everyone must be remembered, from grandpapa to the gardener's boy, and small brains, like bigger ones, have been very much worried over the Christmas shopping.

Oh, the Christmas shopping—the waiting three deep at the counter, and the being invariably overlooked because your head hardly comes above it! Oh, the crushing, bustling, irritable grown-ups, who crowd the booking-offices and lifts and trains, and seem to think that importance and superiority go by *size* only!

Still, little discomforts of this sort are all in the good cause of Christmas, and

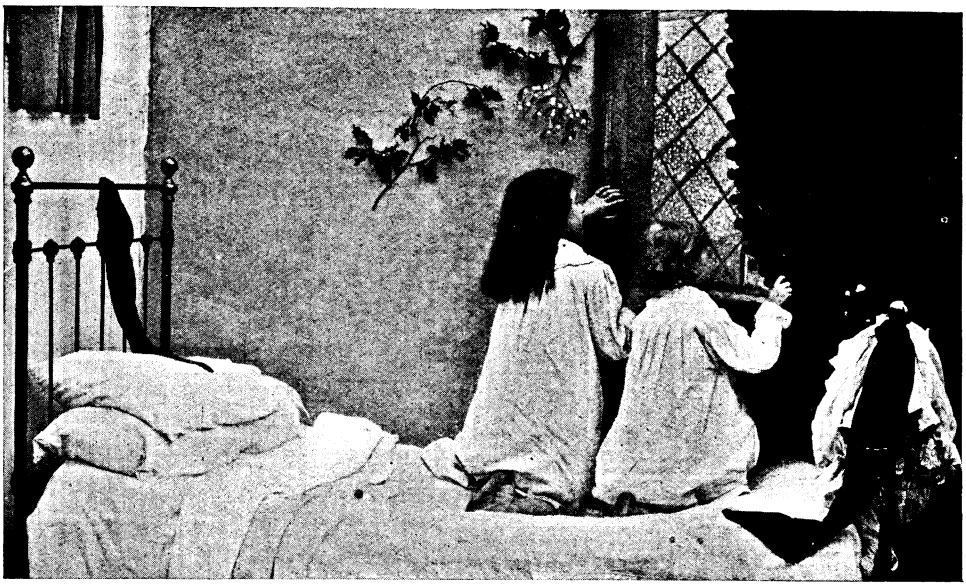
naturally traffic becomes congested when everybody carries a sheaf of brown-paper parcels, not forgetting the youngsters; in fact, the rule seems to be—the smaller the child, the larger the parcel.

Those who are not old enough to go shopping are never too young, however, to give the pudding a stir, to seize that dreadfully sticky-handled spoon and push it a little way through the brown, delicious jorum in the big pancheon on the kitchen table. Then there are the silver charms to be dropped in and stirred round—the mascots that will bring love and wealth, or *vice versa*, to possessors of fortunate slices. So enthusiastic, in fact, do the little ones grow over this part of the pudding-making that they have been known, on the sly, to push in little possessions of their own—tiny china animals, for the most part, which, when the pudding is eaten, bid fair to make the dentists of their adult victims busy.



"HANGING UP THEIR DOLLS' STOCKINGS." BY MAX COWPER.

But there are other things to be done besides making or marring the pudding.



"WATCHING FOR SANTA CLAUS ON CHRISTMAS EVE."

There is the *doyley* to be worked for Mummy, under nurse's supervision, and the paper-plaited mat for Daddy. Both cost some tears, but both, a trifle "shop-soiled" and grimy, are eventually presented and received with great pride and enthusiasm on Christmas morning. What a relief it is, too, when the secret is out at last, and the reason of all that hole-and-corner hiding-away business can be confessed, though there is something sensationally fascinating about the December whisperings, the closed-door consultations, and, to small prying noses and peering eyes, the shut drawers

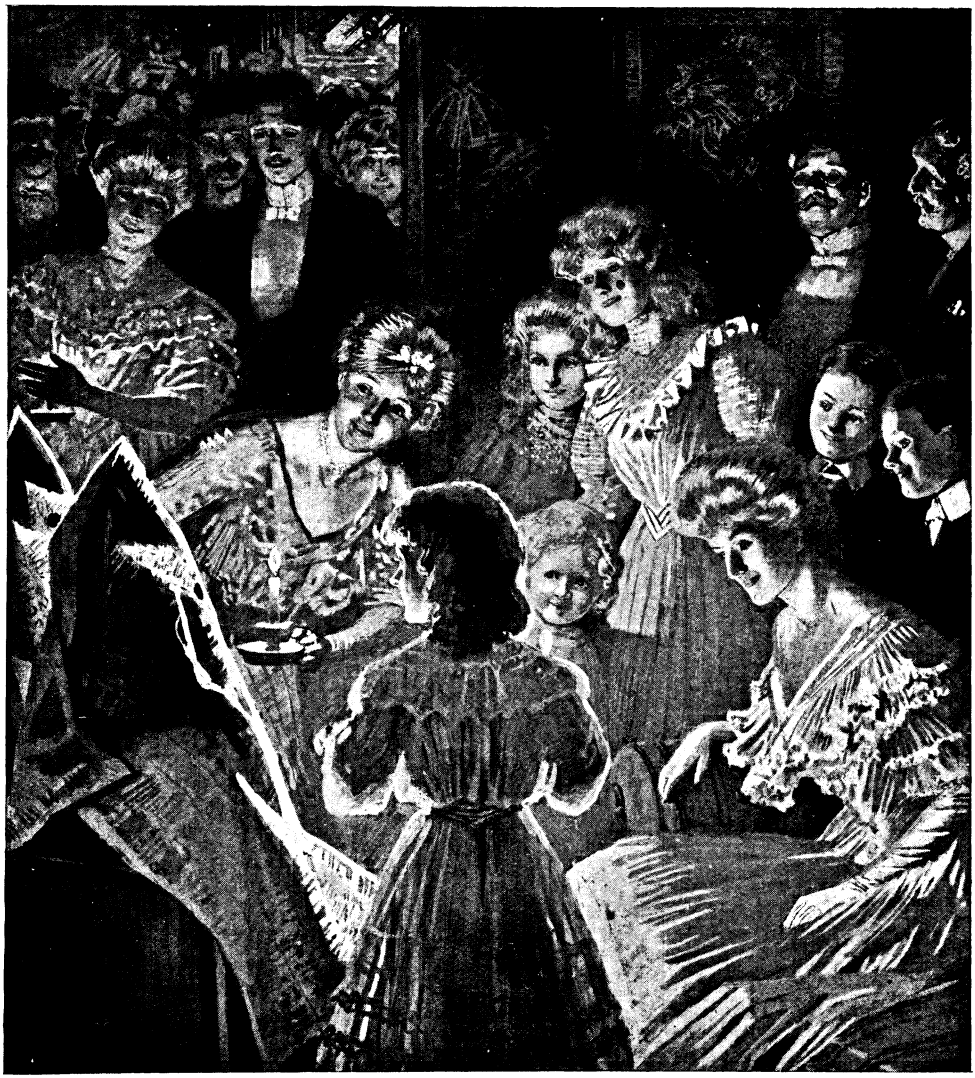


"BEYOND THE DREAMS OF AVARICE."

Two photographs by W. H. Bunnett.

not to be opened, and the dark corners of cupboards bulging with parcels not to be investigated till Christmas.

Yes, it's a long, lovely, magical time for children, full of mystery, which comes to a head on Christmas Eve. Can any child be whole-heartedly swallowed, as his ample form gliding down a very constricted chimney and filling stockings with gay-coloured gifts unblemished by a vestige of soot? Of course there are some sceptics—the Boy Scouts, for example. It is a little too much, naturally,



"AT THE CHILDREN'S PARTY: WHOSE ARE THE EYES?" BY LUCIEN DAVIS, R.I.

expected to go to sleep in an ordinary manner on that most extraordinary night, when the very air is charged with stealthy expectancy, and Santa Claus may arrive at any moment?

Santa Claus! Was ever so burly a saint so deservedly loved by such a host of undersized disciples? Was ever a miracle so to imagine for one instant that this, the newest of new ideas, should be taken in by the oldest of old superstitions. Why, if the members of a local "patrol" should actually come across the scarlet-robed and hooded figure on his rounds, they would track his spoor across the snow, and, in all probability, hand him over to the authorities



"WAKE UP!"

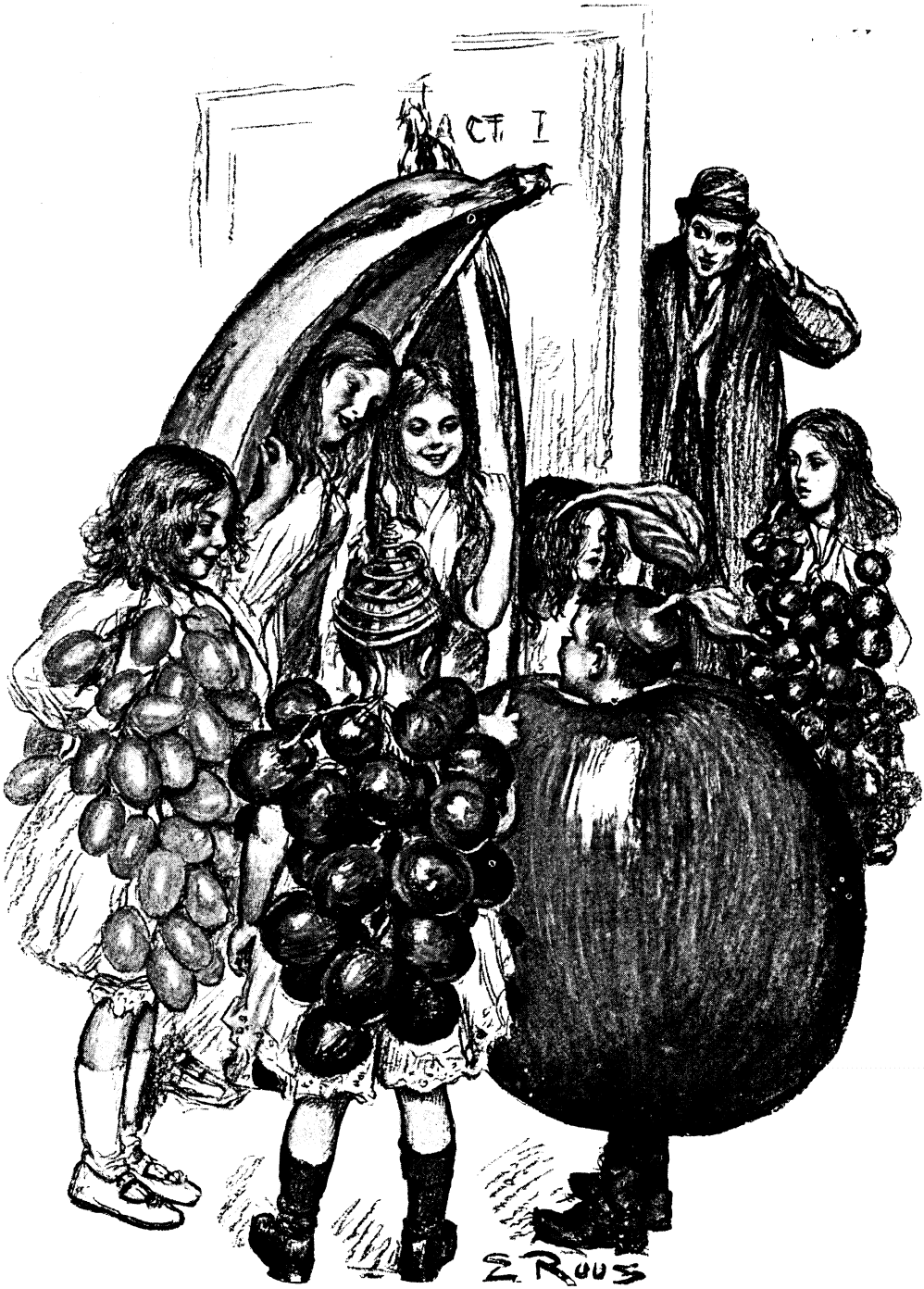
By Arthur J. Elsley.

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"CHILDREN'S VOICES." BY ISAAC SNOWMAN.

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"BEHIND THE SCENES AT A CHILDREN'S PLAY: HARASSED STAGE-MANAGER EXCLAIMING—'WHERE ON EARTH HAS THAT APPLE GOT TO?'" BY EVA ROOS.

and charge him with having stolen his sackful of toys from a certain well-known London emporium.

But the normal child, of any age between two and six, and sometimes later, never connects the fairy toys in the stocking with their



"CHARITY AT THE CHRISTMAS FEAST." BY LUCIEN DAVIS, R.I.

doubles sold over the counter in every toy-shop; and how valiantly they try to keep the dustman away on Christmas Eve, and even creep barefoot to the landing in order to intercept Santa Claus if he should come that way. But that is, of course, before they have been to school, for it is at school that the first seeds of scepticism are usually sown.

If children find it hard to go to sleep on Christmas Eve, they find it equally hard to stop asleep on Christmas morning; and one of the great pleasures of the grown-ups' Christmas is to stand and watch the "crib inhabitant" wake as the day of enchantment is beginning to dawn. Small fists are rubbed into sleepy eyes, the little form tosses and squirms among the tumbled bedclothes. Suddenly it sits erect as memory returns. The wide eyes—blue, brown, or hazel—light on the bulgy stocking hanging



"TRACKED! THE LATEST PREDICAMENT OF FATHER CHRISTMAS IN HIS ATTEMPTS TO ESCAPE PUBLICITY." BY HAROLD C. EARNSHAW.

on the crib rail, and the toys that have brimmed over on the bed. The dream has come true! It is Christmas morning! Santa Claus has really been! And with joyous cries of gratified desire, the child tears down the stocking and pulls out the toys with a frantic enthusiasm that makes the crib creak in all its joints.

But in some fortunate, or unfortunate, cases the early morning gifts of Santa Claus are only a drop in the ocean of toys that rises round the little one—generally an only child—as the day progresses. There are presents by post, presents brought by hand from neighbours, presents from guests in the house, all to be unwrapped and attended to, till, literally bored to tears, the bewildered recipient pushes the growing heap of parcels petulantly aside, and tries wearily and with jaded appetite to play with one or two among the score already unwrapped, and exclaims with piteous entreaty, as nurse brings in another handful of envelopes: "Oh, *don't* bring me any more cards!" And the moral addressed to parents and guardians, when such an event threatens, is this—keep back the overplus for a rainy day, or pass them on to the less highly favoured.

"Just enough, and not too much" is a good adage for all times, but particularly appropriate for Christmas. There are so many good things to eat, to taste each of which is a special duty of the season, that the knowledge that immoderation has been indulged in does not arrive home till too late. Think of the glamour that hangs about every course of the Christmas dinner, the noble bird and all its stodgy "trimmings," the holly-crowned pudding, and the insidious superstition that promises happy months to the struggling eater of mince-pies.

The day, however, brings its own antidote, for there is no doubt that Christmas games are particularly helpful to both youthful and adult digestions, and the children are, perhaps, kinder than they mean to be when they insist on the grown-ups "playing too," in spite of their evident desire for more passive pleasures.

But who can say "No" on Christmas Day? So the bachelor-uncle crawls round the room with a well-fed child taking horse exercise on the small of his back—a performance which would bring on an attack of lumbago at a less genial season—and the elderly maiden-aunt forgets to be acid, even when the joke turns against herself.

Then comes a sudden interruption as a mysterious voice from the passage calls the children to the breakfast-room door, which, by the way, has been locked since morning. It is open now, and the children, hushed and awed, crowd into the darkened interior, for there on the table stands the Christmas-tree, that symmetrically-shaped dwarf-fir, radiant with coloured candles, sparkling with silver festoons and rainbow balls, with an eloquent burden of toys weighing down each bough, and there, on the topmost twig, stands a fairy doll in glittering gauze and flounces, a wand in her hand and a star in her golden hair.

All the world over the Christmas-tree is the crowning glory of the children's Christmas, from the dream-vision of the woodcutter's little daughter in the heart of the winter forest, to the mighty fir that rears its toy-laden branches to the roof of the supper-rooms at our big restaurants on the "children's night."

It has been often said: "Ah, it's no Christmas without children!" And, as a matter of fact, in many homes there *would* be no Christmas without the children, who earn the wherewithal to provide the season's cheer. In these times of pantomimes and fairy plays, the salaries of the small mummers not only keep the home together all the year round, but buy the turkey and plum-pudding, the snapdragon and the Christmas-tree for the rest of the family. Those who oppose the employment of juveniles on the stage may have some right on their side, but there is no doubt that the children, not realising the fact that they are the little breadwinners, revel in the brightness, artificial though it may be, shed across their lives when their pantomime time comes round. It may be hard work, and stage managers may occasionally lose their "wool" over the difficulties of keeping their *corps de ballet* together, but, on the whole, the relations between the youngsters and their histrionic instructors are cordial, not to say affectionate, and the children are undoubtedly protected and cared for, and thoroughly enjoy themselves.

So here is Christmas upon us again, kinder, bigger, jollier than ever; and, ignoring the croakers who say the festive season is not what it used to be, we turn to the millions of delighted and excited little ones, whose one regret is that Christmas comes only once a year, though, for the sake of "daddy's" pocket, not to mention their own digestions, it's really just as well it doesn't come twice.



THE SHEPHERD'S YEAR.

BY S. L. BENSUSAN.

Photographs by Charles Reid, Wishaw.

OF all the work of the farm, sheep-rearing is, perhaps, least understood by the townsman, and the blame for his ignorance must be laid, in part at least, to the charge of the Elizabethans. They have given us shepherds who wear fine clothes and have ample time to play upon musical instruments and make love to attractive village maidens. Their sheep seem to concern them less than anything else. They are like the Rev. Hopley Porter of Gilbert's ballad—

> He plays the airy flute,
> And looks depressed and blighted;
> Doves round about him "toot,"
> And lambkins dance delighted.

Even John Milton suggests a very easy existence in which—

> Every shepherd tells his tale,
> Under the hawthorn in the dale,

as though the counting of the flock were one of the most important of the shepherd's labours. But all this is no more than the veil of enchantment that poets are privileged to weave. When it is withdrawn, "the cold material laws" that rule the shepherd's life are clearly seen, and we know that the shepherd of the realms of poetry is only to be seen in old Dresden and other delightful china ornaments.

The first-rate shepherd works as hard as the busiest gardener or gamekeeper in the countryside. There are times in the year when his rest is seriously curtailed. He must understand the points of ram and ewe and lamb, the value of all food material—both what it costs and what it yields—and the qualities of pasture-land and root crop; he must have a quick eye for sickness among his flock, and a sound knowledge of simple remedies. His vigilance must never be relaxed, for there is no animal on four legs quite so silly as a sheep.

There are two kinds of sheep pasture in these islands. The arable lands, in which pastures appear in rotation, and the permanent grass-lands may be said to belong to one class, while the mountain pastures form the other. Hill shepherds are strange and solitary men. I remember visiting some far Highland sheep-

farms some years ago, when in search of ptarmigan, and on more than one occasion I have stayed in some shepherd's cot-hut on the lee side of bleak hills covered with heather and cotton grasses that gave pasture to hundreds of sheep. The shepherds in these far glens were the most silent men I have ever met. Save when they took their flocks to market, they seldom saw any fellow-creatures. Through the winter months their stores were left for them in some cottage miles away, where the main road passed the entrance to the glen, and once in three or four weeks they would choose a fine day and go down to fetch the goods. Sometimes they would be snowed up for weeks on end; and when lambing time came, at the end of March—a full month or six weeks later than in the south—their life on the bleak, windy, snow-swept hills was as hard as any man's need be. Carlyle and Emerson, on the famous evening they spent together, were not more silent than these men while I was in their company. Their dogs obeyed hand signs, and were seldom instructed by word of mouth. I felt that the sound of their own voices startled the guardians of the flocks.

To the south—or, let us say, below the centre of England—the shepherd is not cut off from his fellows to anything like the same extent. His ewes do not lamb on the cold hills far from human habitations. Very often they are near enough to the homestead to be brought up to the outbuildings at the proper season. The shepherd is not forced to sleep in a roughly built shed without any other comforts than warmth and shelter; save at lambing time, he may enjoy fairly regular hours.

All the shepherd's skill and knowledge of his flock are required to pick out the most suitable ewes for breeding. Those that, for any of a dozen reasons, are rejected for this purpose are sold to graziers, who are less particular than the owner of a good flock, or are promptly fattened for the butcher. The choice of both ram and ewes is of the first importance, and the skill with which a shepherd will sum up their points is only to be acquired by long observation. The selection is made in September, and then the



CHANGING PASTURES.

shepherd demands fresh pasture for his stock ewes, or else requires a rape, turnip, or cabbage field, that they may enjoy a special diet.

For the next five months the feeding of his ewes will be the shepherd's special care. He must neither overfeed nor underfeed them, and must endeavour to see that the ground they use is quite sweet and clean. Roots and straw finely cut are given in the early months, and, at about the turn of the year, bran, crushed oats, chopped straw, and linseed cake are substituted. It is the shepherd's business to see that the food, of whatever kind, is carefully prepared and cleanly served; sometimes he superintends and takes an active part in the preparation. If he be a trusted and responsible man, he



YOUNG LAMBS.

will be at liberty to vary the diet, as he thinks fit, with rape cake and cotton cake, bean meal, malt, and salt. It is only where farming is low and haphazard that the ewes are left to eat what is grown on the land, and do their best upon unselected fare. Under such conditions the farmer's pocket is the only authority consulted. With a valuable flock this style of treatment cannot be tolerated.

With February in the southern counties, and late March or April in the north, the most trying season of the shepherd's year approaches, and much depends upon the proximity of the feeding-grounds to the farm buildings. If there are outhouses in plenty, the ewes can be brought in under permanent shelter and made quite comfortable ; but in many parts of the country this is not possible, and a number of temporary sheds must be put up, under the shepherd's direction, in some comparatively sheltered spot. They must face south, be high enough to enable the shepherd to stand upright, and be divided into a sufficient number of small pens, well drained and ventilated. A wooden hut on wheels, with a small oil stove and a bed, serves for the shepherd himself, and by the side of this there will be a store shed large enough to hold food for the ewes. As soon as lambing begins, the shepherd's time belongs to his flock ; he must eat and sleep when he can, and the forward ewes must be brought into the pens every night. For very weakly lambs, special treatment is required. I have seen half a dozen in the large fowl-house on wheels that served a shepherd, whom I used to visit, for a temporary home. All the little strangers lay round the



EWES AND THEIR LAMBS.

stove, and were fed on whisky and milk. When a lamb dies, and the ewe has no other, one of the twins from another ewe is taken to the bereaved mother with the skin of the dead lamb tied round it. In nine cases out of ten this simple device is quite sufficient to persuade the ewe that the little one is her own. During the lambing season the shepherd is careful to give his ewes plenty of good food, in order that they may yield milk in plenty; and as soon as the lambs are strong enough to follow their mothers, both are taken to the freshest and most sheltered pastures, and the grass fare is supplemented as the shepherd thinks fit, season and the quality of the grass being deciding factors. The docking of the young lamb's tail is a painful operation, held to be necessary on lowland pastures, though on the hills it is not done. Where the special care of young lambs is imperative, they are fed on crushed corn and cake, at troughs railed to admit them while excluding the ewes. As the season proceeds, early vetches and other spring crops may be added to the lamb's bill of fare. It will be seen that the shepherd's job is no sinecure.

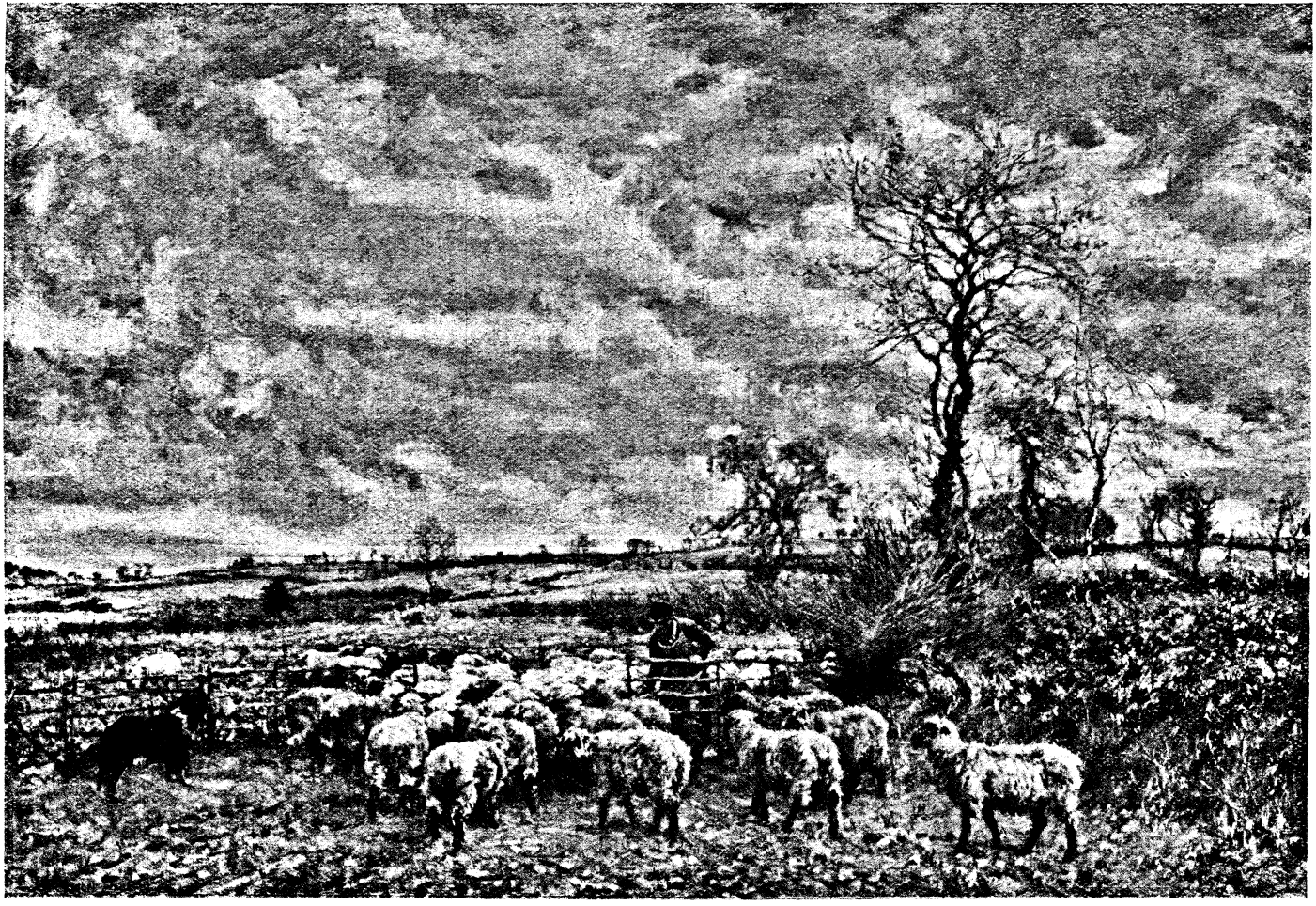


SHEARING.

By the time his flock is in good condition, and the labours of the lambing season are forgotten, the shepherd must prepare to wash and to shear his flock, though in this work he will have all the assistance he requires. It is neither an easy nor a pleasant job to wash sheep; they are very nervous, and plunge and struggle in a fashion that demands skilled handling. Where there is a river with clear gravel bed, the work can be done there readily enough; but not one farm in ten is able to boast of such a treasure, and the business must be done in the fold yard with the aid of a sunken trough filled with tepid water in which a certain amount of soft soap has been mixed. It is astonishing to see how quickly the shepherd, with four or five assistants, can get through the work—a flock numbering a couple of hundred can be washed within two days. When this is done, and the sheep have been allowed to rest, they must be returned to a clean pasture, and, if necessary, the banks and hedges must be railed off, that the fleece may not be sullied before shearing. The washing is very rapid, the sheep being turned on its back with only its head above water; but not even the rapid handling can console the frightened animal, and one is left wondering how the shepherds of the Elizabethan poets and dramatists would look engaged in washing the flock. How it would disfigure their pretty clothes!

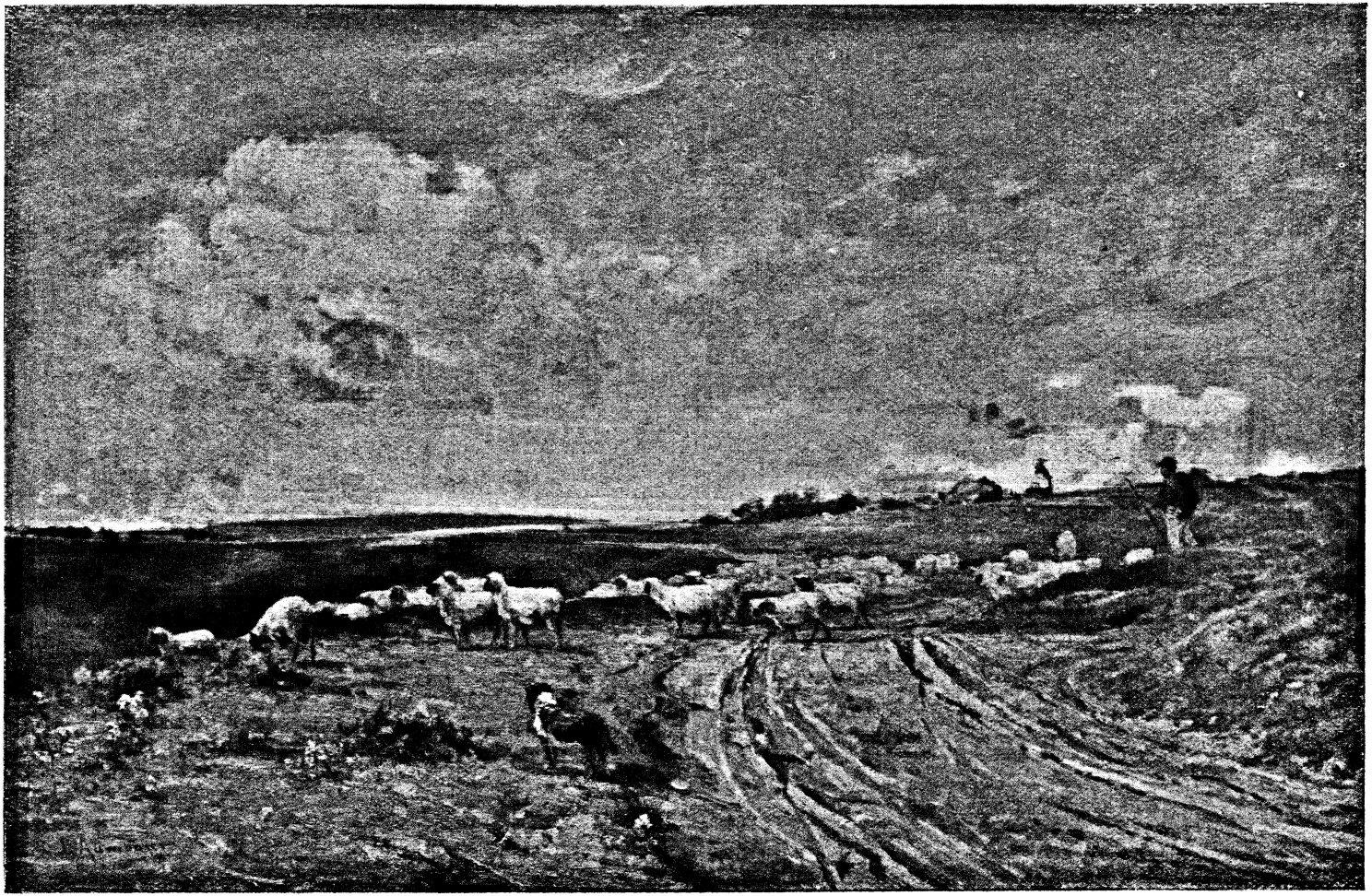
After the washing, and when the fleece is thoroughly dry, sheep are shorn, and a skilled shearer, working without the aid of any of the modern appliances that take so long to reach remote sheep-farms, can handle two dozen or more sheep in a day. The shorn sheep has to be branded, and this is the shepherd's task. It is frequently done with hot tar and a branding-iron, but is not as painful as it looks.

By midsummer the lambs will be weaned, and the shepherd must be very careful with his ewes at this season, or they may suffer considerably by being deprived of their lambs. It is his business to regulate the food so that the milk yield is reduced, and on some farms it is still the custom to milk for a while the ewes from which the lambs have been taken, and to make cheese with the help of cow's milk. This cheese must be kept for a year or longer, and is then quite palatable. About weaning time the shepherd has yet another responsibility. Both ewes and lambs must be dipped in order that they may not suffer from the many troubles



"WINTER PASTURES." BY MARK FISHER, R.I.

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"A BREEZY DAY." BY J. AUMONIER, R.I.

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that beset a dirty animal, and will quickly spread contagion through a flock.

There are countless sheep dips, good, bad, and indifferent. Many a clever shepherd has his own, and eyes patent preparations with a suspicion not altogether unjustified. The dipping-tank is under the shepherd's control, for he is the doctor of the flock, and dipping serves the same purpose that the brimstone and treacle served the boys at Dotheboy's Hall—it keeps the sheep from ailing.

This is, to all intents, the last operation of the season demanding outside aid. The shepherd's chief business now is to see that his young lambs are fed with great care, that they do not eat some of the green foods when the ground is drenched with dew, and that any of the simple ailments that beset

dangerous. For example, to take lambs off grass and put them in the early morning on to a turnip field would be to invite disaster. Then again, as the season advances, the teeth of young sheep loosen, and if they are fed on uncut roots, they suffer badly. Even the introduction of swedes and mangel wurzels into the food is dangerous. Sometimes it is the shepherd's duty to fatten sheep under cover either for shows or for market, and this work can only be accomplished successfully by the man who knows the flesh-forming values of various foods, understands the measure of accommodation required, and how to guard the sheep against the horrible foot-rot that is one of the first bad results of neglect, whether in confinement or on wet, low-lying ground.



THE FLOCK AT HOME.

even a healthy flock are treated in good time. Long before summer is at an end, he will be able to tell you the points of all the year's new stock, and he will be heard with close attention when he tells his master what he thinks about the flock. Nobody can tell as well as he how many should be fattened off or set apart for breeding; nobody can point out with equal certainty the weak points of the flock, or indicate as shrewdly the line selection for breeding must follow. He knows to a nicety how to differentiate between the feeding of the ewes for the market and the feeding of the others, and the question of feeding is as important as any the shepherd has to face. To change the food suddenly or even at the wrong time of the day is most

Naturally enough, the foregoing statements are of a very general character. The treatment of a flock is ruled largely by the character of the land, the tradition of the county, the length of the owner's purse, the skill of the shepherd and the measure of liberty he enjoys. The conditions in the Highlands are complicated by reason of special winter treatment of the flock, which must be dipped or coated to enable it to stand the cold, while the shepherd's labours include the supervision of bridges over the river, and special wind and weather shelters on the hillside. Some shepherds have little of the responsibility; others bear all of it. Some have as much as they require to carry out their work; others must shift as best

they can. There is less high farming in this country than there should be, and where the farming is low, and both land and farmer are poor, you will look in vain for a flock of sheep that is a credit either to the shepherd or his master. Some men do not look for anything better than a small profit and a quick return; the live stock that passes through their hands is no more than a means to an end. Others take a pride in flock and herd, and realise that they have a certain moral duty towards the animals they traffic in—the duty of housing and feeding them well, and sparing them anything in the nature of unnecessary suffering. On the land of the last-named you will find ample accommodation for the flock, shelter against the worst of the weather, and a carefully considered diet.

Even in the southern counties and among the outlying farms of East Anglia, the shepherds share, to some extent, the habit of silence that is the rule of the north. They pass so many hours with only their dog and the flock for company, they have so little time to spare, that they do not respond to the interests of their fellow-workers. They have no leisure for the ale-house and the village club-room. In some parts of the country they may go from year to year without a holiday, and on the clay lands and marshes of the eastern counties, where the silence is almost as oppressive as among the northern hills, they may go for days on end without seeing a fellow-being. It is surprising, under these circumstances, to find so many shepherds unmarried. Perhaps they cannot readily find any woman willing to share



FEEDING THE FLOCK IN HARD WEATHER.

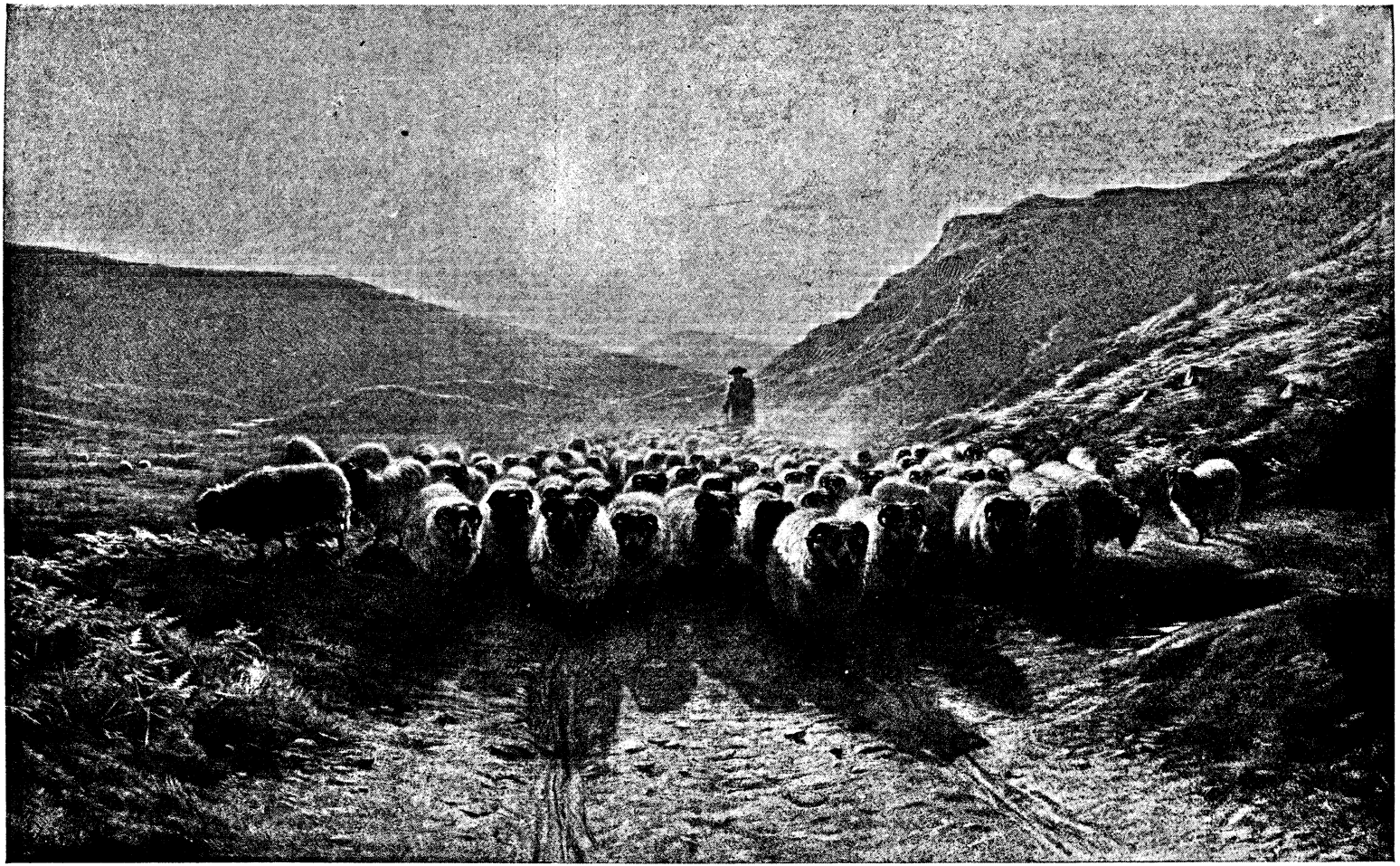
It is hardly necessary to point out again, after this brief summary of his labours, that the shepherd of poetry is not the shepherd of the countryside. Whatever you choose to say about him, you would hardly corroborate the statement in "The Farmer's Boy"—

> On airy downs the idling shepherd lies,
> And sees to-morrow in the marbled skies.

He has but little time for observing anything but his flock, though he has no lack of useful knowledge, and is unrivalled as a weather prophet. Now and again you meet a man who has found time to look around him, but, whatever his knowledge, it will be hard to persuade him to impart it—he can work far better than he can talk.

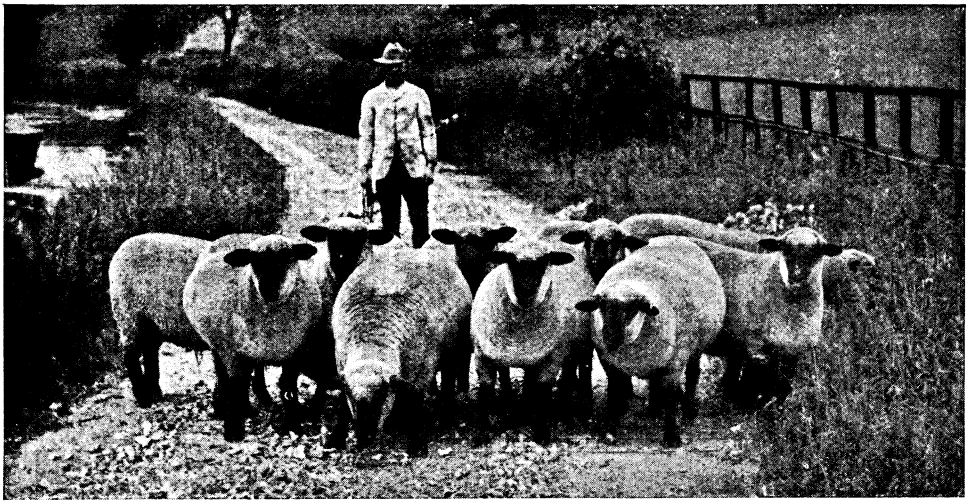
their solitude. Women, as a rule, are far less tolerant of remote country places than men are. Perhaps the shepherds' labours leave them with no time to go wooing. Whatever the cause, there is no doubt that the number of bachelors among shepherds in the more remote corners of Great Britain is quite considerable.

What is the reward of their labours, the endless work that every season renews, until old age and rheumatism drive the once vigorous shepherd to his fireside, perhaps a lonely one? There must be something beyond our comprehension, for the work strains hardy men to breaking-point, and the reward is small. It may be that intimate communion with Nature—a communion



"LEAVING THE HILLS." BY JOSEPH FARQUHARSON, A.R.A.

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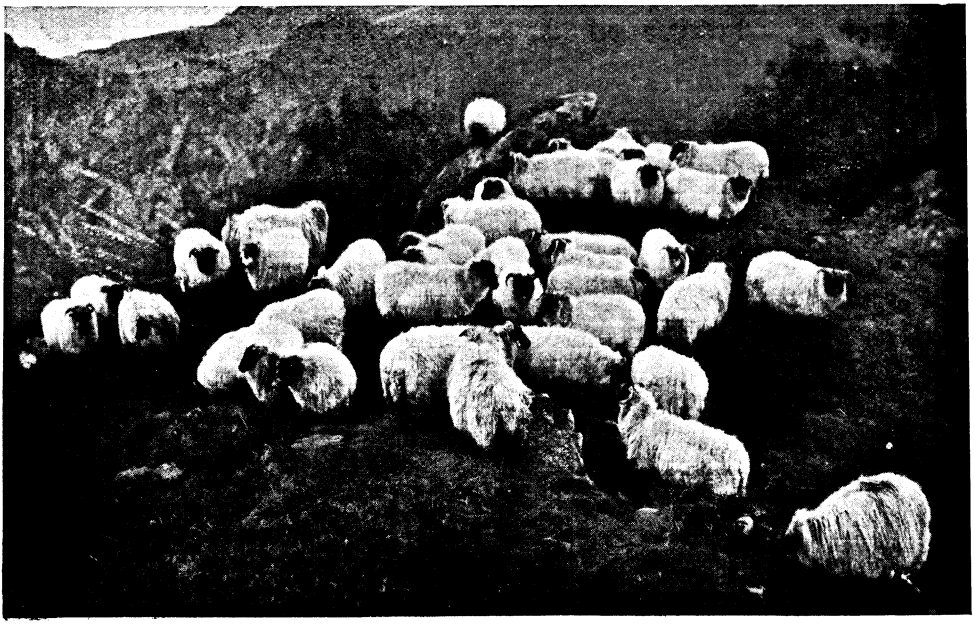


ON THE WAY TO MARKET.

quite beyond the grasp of those of us who live in the country, with neighbours only a few hundred yards away — has a special fascination.

The Highland shepherd is, in a certain limited sense, sharing the life of the golden eagle and the red deer; his lowland brother is often as far removed from man as the green plover that shrills over the lonely downs around him. And we know that men with more than the shepherd's culture, and many opportunities that leisure and culture bring, are wont to travel to the world's byways and enjoy solitude as though it were a very precious gift.

Sometimes, too, a man is a shepherd because his grandfather and father before him were shepherds, and he has inherited a certain gift that puts him on intimate terms with the flock, and enables him to express himself, however silently, in the fashion that suits him best.



HIGHLANDERS.

THE PATHOLOGIST.

By HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

IN the bunk-house of the San Felipe Ranch, three of the boys were about to turn into bed. They had worked hard all day, driving cattle into the home-pasture for the spring *rodeo*, and on the morrow they would have to work harder still, cutting out the steers and branding the calves.

"Who is this Perfessor?" asked Bud, so called because he was the flower of his family.

Jimmie, who was rubbing tallow on to his lariat, answered—

"There's a piece about him in *The Tribune*."

Pete picked up the county paper, which happened to be lying on the floor. He read aloud, in a sing-song drawl—

"'We are greatly honoured by the presence amongst us of Professor Adam Chawner, the eminent surgeon and pathologist——'"

"How's that?" demanded Bud.

"Surgeon an' path—ologist."

"What's path—ologist?"

Pete expectorated a contempt for ignorance which he was too polite to put into words. Then he said suavely—

"A pathologist is a kind o' path-finder. Comes from the Greek, I reckon: *path—logus*—skilled in finding noo paths to knowledge. See!"

"If you ain't a walkin' dictionary!"

"It comes nateral to me," Pete admitted modestly. He continued—

"'The Professor, instead of taking a well-earned holiday in our land of roses and sunshine, proposes to study at first hand the micrococci of a deadly disease which, we are given to understand, is peculiar to this part of California. . . .'"

"Never heard of a deadly disease peculiar to these parts," said Jimmie thoughtfully, "always exceptin' Annie-dominie."

"'Peculiar to this part of California,'" continued Pete, "'and likely, given certain conditions, to develop into an epidemic as terrible and mysterious as the sleeping sickness.'"

"Sleepin' sickness? What's that?"

"Bud, yer ignorance is disgraceful. Sleepin' sickness is common as hives amongst the cannibals. After a square meal o' missionary, the critters fall asleep, and they don't never wake up neither. Serve 'em right, too."

"Go on, Pete."

Pete, with a thick thumb upon the right line, went on—

"'The Professor's researches here may prove of vital importance. And, speaking for our fellow-citizens, we venture to assure this distinguished pathologist of our cordial desire to co-operate, so far as it may be possible, in the important work which he has undertaken.'"

"Slings words, that feller," remarked Jimmie. "But what in thunder is Perfessor Adam Chawner a-doin' on the San Felipe?"

"Come, mebbee, to see you rope steers," suggested Bud.

"I shall aim not to disappoint him," replied Jimmie. "All the same, I ask you fellers straight: Has he come here to—work?"

"Meanin'?"

"If this yere deadly disease is on the rampage, I, for one, 'd like to know it."

"Me too," drawled Bud.

A silence followed as Jimmie coiled up his rope. Pete began to remove his boots. Bud, very furtively, placed a finger upon his pulse. Then he said with constraint—

"Boys, I don't want any joshin'. I've not felt extry spry lately."

"Same here," said Jimmie quickly.

Pete smiled sarcastically.

"A little bird tole me," he remarked slowly, looking at Bud, "as how Miss Mary Willing was seen a-buggy-ridin' las' Sunday with Jack Rice."

"It's true," said Bud shortly. "Me and Mame is at outs. If I was dyin', I couldn't forgive her!"

"You don't say?" cried Jimmie. "Wal, Miss Edna Parkinson an' yours truly ain't goin' ter speak never no more, neither. That hound Ikey Greenberg has cut in with a

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noo Prince Albert coat. It's upset me considerable."

"My trouble ain't heart only," said Bud.

"Stomach?" suggested Pete.

"All overish, mostly."

"You ain't bin readin' the advertisements o' quack doctors, hev ye?"

"Not since I was twenty. They did give me fits at one time. Boys"—he began to scratch himself furiously—"I've a feelin' as if I was afire inside."

"Maw used ter give me sarsaparilla," said Jimmie.

"My folks," observed Pete, "never tuk nothin' but castor ile. Must ha' downed a barrel o' that when I was a kid."

"This thing is drivin' me crazy," said Bud.

"Wal," replied Pete deliberately, "I know what I'd do, and I'd do it quick. This yere Professor is on the ranch, and he's a dandy. After the *rodeo*, you jest sachay up to him an' tell him what you've tole us. If he don't take the kinks outer yer, he's a fraud. See!"

"Gosh," exclaimed Bud, "I'll do it!"

They turned in.

II.

THE Professor, next day, watched the *rodeo* from a platform erected near the biggest of the corrals. This was his first visit to California, and he was mightily impressed by the skill and vigour of the vaqueros. To his hostess he declared that he was amazed to find such splendid specimens in that particular locality. The lady smiled.

"We have not much," she said pleasantly, "but we feel that we have a right to expect high health. We used to say," she added slily, "that sickness was unknown in our hills till a wise doctor settled here from the East."

The Professor frowned.

"I rose at six," he said austerely. "I made a microscopical examination of the water in your new spring, which rises, I venture to remind you, through soil which is undoubtedly diatomaceous."

"That sounds awful."

"Diatoms, madam, in a fossilised condition are silicious, and they are to be found in Virginia, in Bermuda, and here."

"Dear Professor, I am such an ignoramus."

"Then it is my duty to inform you that the man or woman who drinks water from that spring is swallowing millions of tiny flint knives, hard as diamond dust—indeed, diatomaceous earth is used commercially as a polishing powder."

"You mean that, if we drink that water, we shall be polished off?"

The Professor glared at her. Like many distinguished scientists, he took himself seriously, and he *knew* that this was a serious matter.

"Those tiny flint knives cut to ribands the mucous membrane."

"Fortunately," said the lady, "we don't drink that water. The spring was only developed a few days ago." In a graver voice she continued: "My husband and I are exceedingly obliged to you. Of course we shall warn our men."

"Has nobody drunk of that spring?"

His hostess thought that she detected a note of disappointment. She replied reflectively: "I don't think so. The cattle have used it. It doesn't seem to have affected them."

"Are you sure of that?" he demanded sharply.

"You can ask our foreman."

Later, the Professor did so. Uncle Jap came out of the corrals, carrying a branding-iron, and found himself confronted by a short, thick-set man, with prominent, slightly congested grey eyes, which shone keenly out of an immense head.

"I am Professor Chawner, of the Smithsonian. I wish to ask you a question."

"Perfessor, I'm happy to meet ye. It tickles me to death to answer questions. And I stand by the editor o' *The Tribune*. If I kin co-operate in yer important work, why, count me in."

The Professor raised his grizzled brows in astonishment, but he said politely—

"I am very much obliged to you. My question is this: Do the cattle drink at the spring which bubbles out of that hill yonder?"

"Some of 'em do."

"Regularly?"

"Not to say reglerly, Perfessor. It's this way with cattle on a ranch as well watered as ours. They drink when they feel like it, and they drink where the water is handy to the feed. Come to think of it, there never has been much feed around that spring; and it never flowed good and hard till we opened it a few days ago."

"Since you opened it, to your personal knowledge, have cattle drunk of it?"

Uncle Jap scratched his head. The Professor's manner was impressive.

"Have you seen cattle actually drinking that water?"

"I dunno' as I have. I've seen 'em standing in it."

"Animals have remarkable subjective intelligence—what you would term instincts. It would be extremely interesting to determine whether such instincts have prevented them from drinking water unfit for animal consumption."

"Unfit for animal consumption? By gosh, that's what killed our cow, I reckon! We found her lyin' by the spring, cold an' stiff, two days ago!"

"I did so. Colts die anyhow and anyway. It's a solid fact that we've lost more animals in this pasture than anywheres else. I'll take my oath to that."

"Good!" said the Professor heartily.



"They had worked hard all day driving cattle."

"Have you buried the carcass?"

"Not much. Turkey-buzzards attend to our cow funerals."

"Of course. You look excited, my friend."

"I am. We've lost other cattle and colts in this yere pasture."

"Ah!" murmured the Professor. His expression became benignant.

"We s'posed," continued Uncle Jap, "that they died o' old age."

"You mentioned colts?"

"You have given to me information of value."

The Professor returned to his hostess. Under the trees, close to the creek, in whose cooling waters stood bottles of beer and wine, a tender calf was being barbecued. Upon long willow spits sizzled and frizzled toothsome morsels, made more toothsome by the addition of a sauce cunningly compounded of chillies, tomatoes, and the pungent onion. The Professor made a noble meal. He was delighted to observe how few of the

guests slaked their thirst with water, and he quoted the famous quatrain :

> Let princes revel at the pump;
> Let peers with ponds make free;
> But whisky, beer, or even wine,
> Is good enough for me.

After the *rodeo*, the Professor lighted a large cigar and composed himself under a live oak. His mind, ever active, was wandering through the home-pasture seeking the fatal spring. He was trying to estimate the effect of silicious matter upon the mucous membrane of a cow, when he saw Bud, sombrero in hand, bowing low before him.

"Hello!" said the Professor, his eye resting professionally upon Bud's splendid proportions. What a "subject" to cut up! What a skeleton to articulate!

"Perfessor," said Bud, "I want you to hev a look at me."

The Professor looked at him.

"My young friend," he said genially, "you're worth looking at. Do you drink water?"

"When I can't git nothing else," replied Bud. "Water it is, and lots of it, except when I strike town."

"If you must drink water," said the Professor with authority, "have it distilled."

"Jeeroosalem!" exclaimed Bud. "That's a gilt-edged idea. Perfessor, y'ere a pathologist, ain't yer?"

The Professor nodded. Genius, however exalted, acknowledges unsolicited testimonials from any source. He saw plainly that in Bud's eyes he loomed gigantic.

"I am," he replied graciously.

"A path-finder, a seeker-out of noo tracks to knowledge?"

"You might express it worse," said the Professor. "What can I do for you?"

"I'm a mighty sick man," said Bud solemnly.

The Professor was so astonished that he nearly bit through his excellent cigar; but at once a flame sparkled in his grey eyes. If Bud, with his appearance of robust health, was really a mighty sick man, why, then, his case challenged attention. He stood up and, so to speak, spread his wings, hovering over his lawful prey.

"What's wrong?" he demanded.

"I'm afire with itching. At this moment I feel as if some dev'lish imps was stickin' needles into me."

The Professor felt his pulse, looked at his tongue, and nodded sapiently.

"You've been drinking the water of that new spring."

"I hev. I helped open it up."

"Did you drink much of it?"

"Oceans!"

"My poor fellow, I am distressed beyond words. I promise you that you shall have every care and attention. I won't leave this ranch till—till the end."

"The end?"

"You are a remarkable specimen—probably you will make a gallant fight—but I cannot disguise from you—it would be criminal to do so—that you ought to put your house in order."

"Hav'n't got no house," said Bud, not quite comprehending, but sadly frightened, "Me and Mame expected to build next year, but that's off."

"Next year!" echoed the Professor testily. "The question is: Where will you be next week?"

Bud staggered. The Professor, having long retired from active practice, remembered with a qualm that he might have broken this appalling news more considerately. He said quietly—

"I beg your pardon. I ought to have tempered this; but you are an American, and strong enough at this moment to know the truth. I may pull you through. Without boasting, there is not another man in America, or Europe either, who would say as much."

"Christopher Columbus!"

"I don't call myself that," said the Professor modestly, "but I may claim to have discovered pathogenic continents. Now, my boy"—he took hold firmly of Bud's arm—"I am going to put you to bed."

"No, you ain't," said Bud. "I've chores to do. I can't be spared."

The Professor nodded.

"You're a stout fellow. After all, half an hour won't make any material difference."

"In half an hour you'll find me in the bunk-house. I'm obligated to ye," he added hastily. "So long!"

He strode off. The Professor nodded approvingly. He had grit himself, and esteemed it highly in others.

"I must pull him through," he muttered.

III.

When the Professor reached the bunk-house, he found three tall strong men awaiting him. Their faces, tanned by many suns, exhibited a curious uniformity of tint—the colour of dirty gruel.

Bud said in a voice that trembled—

"These are my friends, Jimmie Barker and Pete Holloway. They helped open up

that derned spring. They drank a plenty of the water. Jimmie, here, couldn't git enough of it. They've the same symptoms as I hev."

Jimmie and Pete writhed.

"Pins and needles all over," said Pete.

"Went to sleep on an ants' nest onst,"



Professor Adam Chawner.

said Jimmie faintly. "This is a heap worse."

"Heaven help you!" ejaculated the Professor.

"'Pears to me," said Bud solemnly, "from what you said just now, we're in the mulligatawny."

The Professor muttered something encouraging, but he remembered the cow.

"To bed with you," he commanded.

Within half an hour everyone on the ranch had heard the news. The Professor alone remained monumentally impassive.

"All that is humanly possible shall be done," he affirmed.

"And your treatment?" said the owner of the ranch.

"I have no drugs here, but already I have despatched a man to San Lorenzo for strychnia, which in the first stage is invaluable. Meantime I must do what I can with whisky. Have you plenty of whisky?"

"Yes, but——"

"I want a gallon of it."

"Of course you are aware—you know, I mean——"

The Professor waved a powerful arm; beneath his shaggy brows his grey eyes sparkled angrily.

"I know what I am doing," he said sharply, "and I cannot waste valuable time imparting to a layman knowledge gathered during a lifetime. The whisky, please—*at once*."

His host obeyed meekly. Five minutes later, the Professor was walking towards the bunk-house with a gallon demijohn tucked under his arm. A quarter of an hour afterwards he might have been seen returning. His eyes were positively snapping with vigour and excitement, for he loved a fight for a fight's sake. His pretty hostess floated towards him.

"Professor," she entreated, "I don't want you to impart the knowledge of a lifetime to me, but do, please, like a good kind man, say something. We are on edge with distress and anxiety."

She looked so beguiling that the man of science melted. With a shrug of his massive shoulders, he said mildly, for him—

"My dear lady, I will try to gratify a not unreasonable curiosity. I did not wish to alarm you prematurely this morning, but the worst has happened. The silicious fragments in that confounded earth have lacerated terribly the mucous membranes of these three unfortunate young men. That in itself is a matter of small importance. The mucous membrane is most delicate, but it has quite amazing capacities of repairing itself. The point is this. The water in that spring, and—I'll be perfectly frank—the water in most of the surface springs in this particular locality, is simply swarming with

pathogenic germs, and amongst them I identified this morning the as yet unnamed *coccus* which I had the honour to discover, and which is as deadly as the *coma bacillus* of Asiatic cholera, or—shall I say?—the highly specialised venom of the rattlesnake."

"Heavens!"

"This *coccus*, my dear friend, increases and multiplies under certain conditions. It exacts a highly lacerated condition of the mucous membrane into which it burrows. Fortunately it is rare; fortunately, also, it is seldom found in water which has filtered through diatomaceous earth; for these fossilised deposits are only found here and there, and, as a rule, not near water."

His hostess sighed; the tears welled up in her eyes as she murmured—

"They are three such nice boys!"

"I hope to pull them through," said the Professor stoutly. "For the moment there is nothing more to be done. They are in bed and, not to put a fine point on it, half drunk. Alcohol stupefies the *cocci*, but it does not destroy them. I shall pour whisky down their throats till the drugs I have ordered arrive from San Lorenzo. I have told your foreman that my patients are not to be disturbed. After supper I shall administer another dose of whisky."

IV.

An hour later, the Professor, accompanied by his host, returned to the bunk-house.

"I hope to find them asleep," he said. "I gave them enough alcohol to induce stupor."

"How much?"

"At least a quart."

His host shook his head doubtfully; then he spoke with marked deference—

"I do not presume to question your treatment, but cowboys can carry an amazing quantity of whisky. Alcohol is a stimulant-narcotic, isn't it?"

"Perfectly."

"It stimulates first. Speaking from a variegated experience of cowboys, I should say that a quart of well-matured Bourbon would barely suffice to stimulate three powerful young men."

"'Um!" said the Professor thoughtfully. "I had not considered that. They assured me they were water-drinkers. However, a mistake of that sort is easily rectified."

So speaking, he tiptoed to the door of the bunk-house, and, finger upon lips, entered. Immediately a sharp exclamation indicated that something surprising had occurred. The boss followed quickly, to find the Professor staring, pop-eyed, at three vacant bunks.

"Gone!" said the Professor in stupefaction.

"They can't have gone far, sir."

But within five minutes judgment upon this important point had to be suspended. The foreman had obeyed instructions only too well. He had not been near the bunk-house. Indeed, he and the other ranch hands had been eating supper more than a hundred yards away. He was the first to suggest that no cowboy travelled far afoot—a suggestion that sent the Professor at a smart trot towards the big barn. Here, also, were three vacant stalls.

The Professor's patients, illustrating pathetically the ruling passion, had mounted and galloped away. Uncle Jap said, with a curious air of conviction—

"It's my idee that they want to hev one good time in town before they cash in their checks."

"Incredible!" ejaculated the famous pathologist. He looked askance at his host, who replied hesitatingly—

"I think it is possible, perhaps probable."

"If they're makin' San Lorenzy," said Uncle Jap, "we'll find their store clothes gone too."

The three hastened to the bunk-house. Yes, upon the floor lay flannel shirts and jumpers and overalls. In a corner, where the Professor had left it, stood the demijohn of whisky. Uncle Jap lifted it.

"Gosh," said he, "the whisky's gone, too!"

"Thank Heaven!" muttered the Professor, wiping his forehead.

"Why?"

"Don't you understand? By the luck of things, they've taken their medicine!"

"A quart apiece!" gasped the boss. "We shall find them dead drunk on the road."

Uncle Jap delivered himself—

"It's my idee that they've jest filled up three bottles. There's a rubbish heap outside."

"We must follow them," said the Professor grimly. He was no horseman, and San Lorenzo was five-and-twenty miles away.

"Yes," said Uncle Jap.

As they approached the barn, the Professor whispered to his host—

"There is nothing to regret. If I can get these boys into the County Hospital before to-morrow morning, I shall have done a

splendid night's work. Pick me out a decently mannered horse."

V.

AFTER the Professor had administered the first dose of alcohol, his patients lay quiet for at least three minutes. Then Jimmie said dolefully—

"Badly as she's treated me, I'd like to kiss my Edna good-bye."

In the silence that followed, Pete's rather rasping voice was heard—

"I ain't got no best girl!"

"Y'ere in luck," groaned Bud. "This may break pore Mame's heart. When I'm gone, she'll remember that onst I was the greatest thing on this green earth to her."

Presently Pete remarked: "Surgeon an' pathologist is the Professor."

"Meanin'?"

"Like as not he'll operate."

"Operate?"

"Cut us open, you derned fool!"

Bud retorted savagely: "Now y'ere so near yer end, I'd go easy with sech talk, if I was you."

"I beg yer pardon," said Pete, "but I'm scairt of the Perfessor's eye. Anyways, sink or swim, I'll hev no man gittin' his knife into me."

Bud sat up.

"Boys," he said emphatically, "you kin do as you please, but I'm goin' to hev a las' kind word with my Mame."

He slipped out of his bunk.

"Me too," said Jimmie. He glanced at Pete, who lay still. "My regards to the Perfessor, and tell him that he'll find us at old man Greiffenhagen's. I'll hev one more taste of happiness before I die."

Bud hauled out his battered trunk and opened it. Pete sat up.

"Talkin' o' tasting, so will I," said he.



"'Sorry I promised Maw to let whisky alone.'"

"Give me that ther demijohn. I'll die like the Dook o' Clarence."

Jimmie picked up the demijohn and looked at it with lingering eyes.

"Sorry I promised Maw to let whisky alone."

"If it comes to that," said Pete, "what's the matter with callin' it medicine?"

"Gee! So it is." He took out the cork and tipped up the demijohn, balancing it skilfully upon his right forearm.

"Pass it over," said Pete.

"After you," added Bud.

"Go easy," said Pete shortly. "You two fellers mean to expire in the arms o' ministerin' angels. Leave the demijohn with me."

"What! You'd hog all the medicine? Why, Pete Holloway, I thought you was white!"

"Put that demijohn down."

Bud glanced at Jimmie, who was drawing on his best pants.

"Say, Jimmie, we'll hev to take the medicine along. There's a plenty for Pete in the cellar."

Pete slipped out of his bunk.

"Look ye here," he said. "I ain't goin' to face the Perfessor alone. I'll come with ye, but let there be no huggin' before me; and, I say, divide the medicine."

"Now y'ere talkin'," said Bud approvingly.

The three men dressed rapidly, opened the door, and peered out. Nobody being in sight, they secured three empty bottles, which they filled with the medicine. Five minutes later they were leading their saddle-horses out of the barn. Unobserved, they mounted and took the road.

"How air you two feelin'?" said Pete, as they broke into an easy "lope."

"Thunder and Mars!" exclaimed Bud.

"It's a doggoned fact, but I'm feeling fine."

"It's the medicine," said Jimmie, athirst for more.

"The Perfessor's a stem-winder, an' no mistake," said Pete. "Let's drink his health —onst."

They did so—twice.

Old man Greiffenhagen's was about two miles distant. With him lodged Miss Edna Parkinson, who taught school, and Miss Mary Willing, the village post-mistress. These young ladies were bosom friends, and members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. We describe them adequately enough by adding that they were capable, pretty, and good.

By this time it was nearly nine o'clock, but a light shone in the Greiffenhagen parlour. As the young men dismounted and hitched their horses to the fence, the strains from an American organ were heard.

Pete rapped upon the door, which was opened by Greiffenhagen. He kept the village store, which was also the post-office, and, although German himself, had married an American wife. Pete said in a loud voice—

"It's kind o' late, but this is a P.P.C. call."

As he spoke, there was wafted to the nostrils of Greiffenhagen the familiar fragrance of Bourbon. He glanced at Bud and Jimmie. Each appeared almost abnormally sober and solemn. At this moment Miss Mary Willing flitted up.

"Why, it's Mr. Holloway!" she exclaimed stiffly.

The three entered. As they passed the threshold, Jimmie stumbled, but recovered himself. He saluted the ladies with decorum, and the three sat down upon the edge of the chairs that were offered to them. Then Miss Edna Parkinson, who was the only person present beside Pete who understood what was meant by a P.P.C. call, and who knew also that, the big *rodeo* being over, it was possible that the three cowboys had been discharged, said sympathetically—

"You ain't leaving these parts, are you?"

Pete answered grimly: "It's more'n likely that we air."

Edna glanced at Mamie, who was sniffing.

"What is it I smell?" she asked.

"Medicine," said Bud. He knew that Pete, the walking dictionary, could be trusted to break the appalling news to these unhappy girls. He glanced at Mr. Holloway and nodded.

"Yes," said Pete, "you smell medicine. It was prescribed by the distinguished surgeon an' pathologist, Professor Adam Chawner."

"Prescribed? Why?"

Once, in the dear dead days that were gone, Pete had owned a best girl, who had treated him ill. Ever since he had exhibited a not too chivalrous desire to "git even" with the fond but fickle sex. Also he had no respect for the W.C.T.U.

"The trouble come o' drinkin' too much water."

"Too much water?"

"We three hev bin wallerin' at a pizoned spring. The Perfessor may pull us through, but it's no cert. Much the contrairy. Likely as not you'll be attendin' our funerals within the week. Bud and Jimmie tuk a notion that they'd like to forgive ye, an' I come along too because I reckon misery loves company. But I made this stippilation—no huggin' before me, if you please."

"Is he—d-d-drunk?" faltered Edna.

"I'm nearly drunk," said Pete. "This yere pizon is same as rattlesnake pizon. We've got to be kep' filled plum up with whisky." He produced his bottle and placed it carefully upon the floor, then he added: "When I can't help myself, I count on you, old man"—he looked at Greiffenhagen—"to pour it down my throat."

"Bud," said Miss Willing, "can't you say something?"

"I'm razzle-dazzled," said Bud. "But I couldn't die without forgivin' yer."

"Edna," said Jimmie, with a sob in his voice, "I have no hard feelin's left."

"These three *beasts*," said Mrs. Greiffenhagen, in a hard, unwavering voice, "are disgracefully and unblushingly intoxicated. Girls, leave the room!"

The girls looked at each other. Mamie Willing leapt to the situation. Upon a small marble-topped table reposed an immense family Bible. Mamie lifted it and approached Pete.

"Swear on this that your terrible story is true."

"I swear," said Pete solemnly, and he kissed the Book. Edna flung herself into Jimmie's arms; Mamie, after replacing the Bible, knelt sobbing at Bud's side. Pete said helplessly to old man Greiffenhagen: "Take me outer this!"

Mrs. Greiffenhagen said in the same hard monotone: "Mr. Greiffenhagen, either these men leave this house or I do."

The storekeeper led his wife aside and

whispered to her. She nodded none too graciously, and he hurried from the room.

"Wheer's he goin'?" asked Pete.

"He's goin' up ter the ranch-house," said Mrs. Greiffenhagen spitefully, "ter fetch the Professor."

"Very right an' proper," yawned Pete. "Would it be trespassin' too much on yer kindness to ask fer three glasses? It's time we downed some more medicine, an' I don't like to drink outer the bottle in this yere parlour."

Mrs. Greiffenhagen folded her hands. She had been heard to declare in public that if she were dying, and a thimbleful of whisky would restore her to health and Mr. Greiffenhagen, she would not swallow it.



"Mrs. Greiffenhagen glared at Pete, who from time to time kissed his hand to her."

The three men took more medicine. Presently Mamie supported Bud to the sofa; Edna was sitting on the floor with Jimmie's head on her lap. Mrs. Greiffenhagen glared at Pete, who from time to time kissed his hand to her. Not till she heard footsteps on the porch outside did the good lady rise from her chair. She opened the door to admit her husband. He reeled in.

"You too!" she said in a freezing voice.

Greiffenhagen explained. The boys were really poisoned, and whisky must be poured down their throats till stronger remedies arrived. The Professor, the boss, and the major-domo were riding to San Lorenzo upon a wild-goose chase. He added that the boss's wife was driving down with more whisky.

Within a few minutes the most gracious lady in that part of the county had arrived, and even Mrs. Greiffenhagen was constrained to unbend before her. It was decided to put the men to bed, pending the arrival of the Professor. Two vaqueros were galloping after him in the hope of overtaking him before he had gone too far. Bud was undressed and placed in Miss Willing's muslin-curtained bed; Jimmie, who would not permit his clothes to be removed, was laid upon the couch of Edna Parkinson. Pete was carried into the Greiffenhagen bedroom and deposited, boots and all, upon a spotless white bedspread.

"Jiminy Christmas," said Greiffenhagen, "ain't it awful?"

At regular intervals the medicine was administered. Finally, what the Professor had desired came to pass. The three men lay senseless, breathing stertorously. To achieve this result more than a gallon of the best whisky had been used! Mamie and Edna began to exhibit symptoms of hysteria.

"I'll never leave my Bud—never!" declared Mamie, when it was suggested that she should return to the parlour.

"Jimmie, dear," sobbed Edna, "if you'll promise me not to die, I'll never speak to Mr. Greenberg again!"

VI.

AT about six the next morning Pete Holloway woke up. He opened his eyes, groaned deeply, and closed them again. Then he heard the soft voice of his employer's wife, and the touch of her hand upon his forehead.

"How are you feeling, my poor Pete?"

Pete groaned again, for memory of all that had passed came to him. With a tremendous effort he said—

"I'm dyin'!"

And he looked it.

In Miss Parkinson's bower, Jimmie Barker was saying faintly: "Kiss me good-bye, Edna; the hour has come!"

Shortly before, Mamie had whispered to Bud: "Darling, can you forgive me?" And he had replied fervently: "Mame, if Jack Rice kin make you happy, you take him."

Greiffenhagen had tried to administer more medicine. The boys refused to touch it. Pete expressed the feelings of the others when he muttered: "I ain't goin' to cross the Jordan drunk!"

The wife of the boss, distracted with misery, wondered vainly why the Professor did not come. She had no experience of illness, but it seemed to her that the three men were sinking. Mrs. Greiffenhagen, an impassioned pessimist, was of opinion that they couldn't last another hour!

At nine, when the nerves of the women had been strained to breaking-point, the boss and a big-bearded stranger galloped up to Greiffenhagen's house.

"It's Doc. Elkins, of San Lorenzy," said a hired man.

"The boys are sinking!" sobbed the boss's wife. "Where is the Professor?"

"I left him in San Lorenzo."

Elkins and he rushed upstairs and into the Greiffenhagen bedroom. Elkins glanced at Pete, felt his pulse, and then said deliberately—

"My man, you're dying of sheer funk! You've poisoned yourself with nothing more deadly than good Kentucky whisky! In six hours you'll be perfectly well again."

Pete heard, and pulled himself together. It struck him that this was not the first time that he had felt nearly dead after imbibing much whisky.

"But the Perfessor?" he asked feebly.

"Professor Adam Chawner," said Elkins in a clear voice, "is in a strait-waistcoat at the County Hospital. He will get over this, but not so quickly as you will. He is quite mad for the moment about a deadly microbe which only exists in his imagination."

The partitions in most Californian houses are indecently thin. As Elkins's voice died away—and Pete said afterwards it was like a strain of heavenly music—a feeble cheer was heard from the chamber usually occupied by Miss Mary Willing.

"Jimmie," cried Bud, "air you dead yet?"

"Not quite," came an attenuated whisper from the other side of the passage.

"We'll live to be married, old socks," continued Bud in a robuster voice, "but I've got the worst dose o' prickly heat you ever saw."

The following day our three young friends were riding the range. Six months afterwards, Professor Adam Chawner resumed his work at the Smithsonian Institute.

THE END OF THE DAY.

SEE, where the path winds, laced with soft shadows now,
That stood so steep before in the full sun;
How calm and cool the evening falls, and how
Benign the breeze upon the traveller's brow—
The wanderer whose goal is nearly won.
What peace and cheer the journey's close endow,
Now that he knows the long, bright day is done!

ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON.

AUSTIN'S SENSE OF HUMOUR.

By KEBLE HOWARD,

Author of "The Smiths of Surbiton," "The Whip Hand," etc.

"PEOPLE talk an awful lot of rot about women," said Austin.

I agreed.

"Since I've been married," he went on, looking as much as possible like the married men of middle age with whom he travels in the train, "I've corrected a great many of my wrong impressions about them."

"I suppose you have."

"Oh, dear, yes! For example, you will often hear it said, even by men who are married themselves, and should, therefore, know better, that women are lacking in a sense of humour. Whenever I hear a man say that, I know that he himself is lacking in intelligence. No offence, old fellow."

"You've never heard me say it."

"Are you sure? I seem to remember——"

"Certainly not. I have always held that a woman's sense of humour is keener than that of a man. One of a woman's most important duties is to laugh at her husband when he is making a fool of himself. Take Celia, for instance."

"I was leading up to Celia. Celia has a splendid sense of humour."

"Exactly."

"Yes, but she doesn't take advantage of it to—she doesn't use it in the way you suggest."

"She might if the necessity ever arose."

He gave me a very suspicious look, but I managed to maintain a perfectly grave demeanour. This flattered him. Austin is still under the impression that he never made a fool of himself in his life, and never will. 'Tis a glorious age.

"Well, yes," he admitted, "I dare say she might."

"And you, I feel sure, would be the first to thank her."

"Of course I should. In the meantime, don't run away with the idea that the sole use for a woman's humour is to enable her to laugh at her husband. It is just as valuable, when one knows how to make the most of it, to enable her to laugh at herself."

"Valuable to you or to her?"

"To both. It's valuable to her because it prevents her from being too distressed if some little thing happens that is not quite to her liking. There are lots of opportunities for the exercise of a woman's humour in the ordinary give-and-take of married life."

"I'm convinced of that."

"For example, I might decide, at the last moment, to stay in town and dine with a friend. I might even forget to wire Celia to that effect. Now, if she had no sense of humour, she might work herself up into a great rage about it, and refuse to speak to me for a week. Having an exceptionally fine sense of humour, however, she would see very quickly the folly of two people living in the same house not speaking to each other, and be able to laugh herself out of her bad humour. D'you see what I mean?"

"Do you often put her humour to the test in that way?"

"I didn't say I ever had. I said I might."

"Quite so. I wonder——"

"Well, what do you wonder?"

"How long her sense of humour would last out."

"My dear chap, a real sense of humour is inexhaustible. It's like a well. I know you want to say that wells sometimes dry up, but Celia's sense of humour is deeper than any well. I'm married to her, and I think I ought to know."

"You have given that well a pretty good sounding, eh?"

He smiled. He was intensely pleased with himself. If I am ever in danger of losing my patience with Austin, it is when he is most pleased with himself. There is nothing quite so irritating as perfect urbanity arising out of inordinate self-satisfaction.

"Yes," he said, "I think I have."

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"And you have never yet plumbed the depths?"

"Not yet. I thought I had, once or twice. As a matter of fact, I thought I had last Tuesday."

I remained silent. I could see that he was dying to boast of his success as a marital diplomatist. The less curiosity I showed, the more he would endeavour to impress me.

"You don't happen to know a fellow called Jack Holland, I suppose?"

"I don't think so."

"No, you wouldn't. He's a very sporting sort of chap—spends a lot of time at race-meetings, and plays poker till five in the morning, and all that sort of thing. I've met him once or twice, and he's certainly excellent company if one happens to be in the right mood. Knows everybody and goes everywhere. Full of yarns. Well, I ran across him in the City on Tuesday, and, quite on the spur of the moment, asked him to come home with me and have some dinner.

"To my surprise, he accepted. I felt that it was rather a compliment, as a matter of fact, because Holland is generally full up with engagements. He was quite nice about it. Asked if I was sure that he wouldn't be in the way. I told him, of course, that my wife would be only too delighted to see him."

"And was she?"

"You really ought to cure yourself of that habit of interrupting, old man. I quite intended to wire Celia from Waterloo, but Holland was so amusing that I forgot all about it. I remembered as soon as we were in the train, but then it was too late. Celia didn't take it very well, I must admit. She was awfully nice to Holland, of course, but she rounded on me at the first opportunity for not wiring—said there was nothing for dinner, and that she had a bad headache. I was very sorry about the headache, but it was obviously too late, then, to put him off."

"Just a little."

"The dinner wasn't up to much, certainly, but Holland made the best of it, and I gave him plenty of champagne as a sort of make-weight. He trotted out all his best stories, and we really had a very jolly evening. Some of the yarns were a little risky, perhaps, seeing that Celia was there, but she's very broad-minded. The worst of it was that Holland missed the last train and had to stop the night."

"And even that didn't plumb the depths?"

"It did almost. It took me a long time to make Celia see the humorous side of the affair."

"How long?"

"Well, she didn't see it fully for three days."

"She sees it now, then?"

"Oh, rather! I kept explaining to her what an irresponsible sort of chap Holland is, and what a sporting thing it was to accept an invitation in that casual way, and even miss his last train and have to sleep in a strange bed, and borrow some of my pyjamas, and all that, and at last she saw the joke and laughed. Holland came down just in time for lunch next day, and so I had to stay away from the office, and go up to town with him in the afternoon. I must say, I don't think many women would have taken it all as a joke."

"No," I said, "I don't think they would."

"Sense of humour, old man. That's the thing."

II.

I QUITE looked forward to hearing Celia's version of the Jack Holland episode. I should not like you to think that I egged her on to talk about it, but I don't mind admitting that I gave her an opportunity.

"Does it ever occur to you," she began, "that I am rather stupid?"

"Never," I replied earnestly. "I always regard you as the cleverest woman of my acquaintance."

"Of course," she said calmly, "that's simply silly! If I were the cleverest woman of your acquaintance, you wouldn't try to flatter me."

"But, my dear Celia, the absolute impossibility of doing anything of the sort proves your cleverness."

There was no reasonable answer to that—at any rate, Celia couldn't find one—so she changed the subject.

"Have you seen Austin lately?"

"Austin—Austin?" I put my head on one side and joined the tips of my fingers, just as they do on the stage. "Yes, he looked me up about three days ago."

"He didn't happen to say anything about me, I suppose?"

"Didn't he, though! We talked of you, and nothing but you, all the time."

"You poor things! How dull for you!"

"I didn't find it dull. On the contrary, I was most interested."

"Then he must have been slanging me."

"No man would be allowed to do that in my presence, not even your own husband."

"You're rather an old dear," said Celia softly. And then she added, in the most careless tone imaginable: "What did he say?"

"Would that be fair?"

"I don't see why not."

"Well, then, we discussed your extraordinary sense of humour."

"Oh, you did, did you? Who began it?"

"I really forget. I think we both hit upon the topic at the same moment."

"That's not true. I know perfectly well that Austin began it. He's got my sense of humour on the brain. I've heard of nothing else for the last six weeks or so. As a matter of fact, I don't believe I have any sense of humour at all. Austin thinks I have, and he seems very glad about it, and so I pretend."

"I can't allow you to disparage yourself in that way."

"My dear man, I'm not disparaging myself. What on earth is there in a sense of humour that all this fuss should be made about it?"

"Humour is the salt of life."

"Is it? Then I don't like salt. There's been a good deal too much salt in our family stews lately. It seems to me that a sense of humour consists in trying to laugh at something that one ought to take very seriously."

"That's rather a cynical view of it, but not so very far from the mark."

"There you are, then! You've admitted that this sense of humour stuff is all nonsense. That's a tremendous concession on the part of a man. If I keep at you a little longer, I shall get you to own up that you haven't any sense of humour yourself."

"I never said I had."

"No, but you think you have. All men do. Austin thinks he has, but he hasn't. If he had, he would have found me out long ago."

"Found you out?" I exclaimed.

"There you go, trying to be funny! You know perfectly well what I mean, because I've told you. He would have found out that, when he expects me to laugh at things, I laugh at them because he expects it, not because they amuse me. I'll give you an instance. About a week ago he brought one of the most horrible men to the house I've ever met."

"My dear Celia!"

"A creature named Holland—Jack Holland. Do you know him?"

I shook my head very decisively.

"You've never even heard of him?"

"Well, ye—es, I've heard of him—just heard of him."

"What have you heard?"

"That he's a sporting sort of chap, spends a lot of time at race-meetings, plays poker till five in the morning, knows everybody, goes everywhere, and is full of yarns. I think that's about all."

"I don't know about knowing everybody and going everywhere," said Celia, setting her little teeth and clenching her little fists, "but there's *one* house he'll never enter again, and that's mine!"

"Then I'm sure he must be a genuine bounder. I'm astonished that Austin——"

"Oh, it wasn't Austin's fault. He was imposed upon. He was just as astonished at Holland's behaviour as I was. But what could he do? The man was our guest, and we've both been brought up to regard the laws of hospitality as sacred."

"Quite right."

"Yes," Celia agreed grudgingly, "I suppose that's right. But one's apt to wish that the laws of hospitality were profane when people insist on playing snapdragon at three in the morning, and enlist the services of your best liqueur brandy and a valuable old china plate from off the drawing-room wall."

"You don't mean to say this——"

"Mind you, nobody had asked him to stay the night. He deliberately missed his last train. A bed had to be made up for him in a hurry, which meant routing the maids out to air sheets, and all sorts of commotion. I think Austin finally got to bed about five. The Holland reptile stayed in bed to breakfast, and kept shouting down over the banisters for more toast, and complaining that we hadn't mastered the first rudiments of making coffee. I had to cut a particularly interesting engagement for luncheon; I was determined not to leave the house as long as that monster was in it. He bade me a condescending farewell at half-past three in the afternoon. Now, I ask you, would you have seen anything funny in that visit had you been in my place?"

"I think I should have wept—or killed somebody."

"I did both—at least, I came as near to killing Austin as I have ever done in my life. He retorted, of course, that I had no sense of humour. It's always the same—sense of humour, sense of humour, sense of humour! I tell you I'm sick to death of those three words! They seem to have a *numbing* effect upon me. There's no answer

to them. It's just as though somebody said to you, after giving you a fearful whack on the head : 'I'm very sorry, but that's the law.'"

"What's sauce for the goose," I said slowly, "is sauce for the——"

"I know that," she interrupted passionately, "but Austin really has a sense of humour. He can laugh anything off, and he does. He arrays himself in his horrible sense of humour as though it were chain armour. One can't get at him anywhere."

"Then you must forge a sharper and a stronger spear. Even the finest chain armour is not invulnerable."

"You think it possible that I could——"

"Quite possible."

"And you think I should be justified ?"

"We can't run the risk of repeating the Holland episode."

"No, by Jove ! Tell me something to do that won't make him laugh."

I told her. 'Twas quite a simple thing.

III.

For all that, I was rather taken aback by the promptness of her action. The very next night, as I was enjoying my leisurely, peaceful, well-considered little bachelor dinner, Austin was announced. The young humorist himself followed very quickly on the heels of the announcement, but he did not look strikingly humorous. Or, to be literal, let us say that he looked more like a professional humorist, which he is not, than a professing amateur humorist, which he is.

"Charmed to see you," I said. "Have you dined ?"

"No—I mean, no, thanks ! I'm not hungry. I'm too busy." He talked the door shut in this way, and then burst out : "Are you my friend ?"

Thoughtlessly enough, I laughed. My laugh was harmless, Heaven knows. It merely meant : "My dear boy, that's a strange question. Have I not stood by you in thick and thin, through evil report and good report, before marriage and after ? Have you not snarled at me through the smoke of my own cigars, and have you not loaded me with the bitterest reproaches across this very dinner-table ? Surely this is the ultimate cream of fun to ask whether I am your friend !"

Unfortunately, Austin was not attuned to laughter. His sense of humour was evidently in abeyance. Like a wise and generous master, perhaps, he had given it a night off. At any rate, he bestowed upon me what the historical novelists agree in calling a very ugly look.

"This is no laughing matter," he muttered. "I hoped you would have had tact enough to see that."

I apologised, at the same time timidly pushing the decanter in his direction. He poured himself out a bumper of rather expensive port, and swallowed it at a gulp. I struck a match as sympathetically as possible, and lit my cigar with an apologetic air.

"Tell me," I said in—I fervently hope—just the right tone.

"It's about Celia. She hasn't been home since three o'clock this afternoon, and has sent no word. The maids tell me she was dressed for town, and went towards the station. The station-master informs me that he thinks he saw her get into the three-seventeen. I've telephoned her club three times, but they have seen nothing of her there. What am I to think ? What am I to do ?"

"I shouldn't worry if I were you."

"Oh, it's all very well to talk like that. You don't understand. The thing's absolutely inexplicable."

"Not absolutely, I think. I should say that she received a wire——"

"No, she didn't. I've proved that."

"A letter, then. She received a letter, after you had left home, asking her to run up to see some friends. The friends persuaded her to dine and go to the theatre. Take my word for it, she'll return, safe and sound, by one of the late trains. There's probably a wire awaiting you at home to tell you which train to meet."

"Your theory's all very well," said Austin, "except for one very weak point. She would never be so inconsiderate as to cause me all this anxiety. Whether she stayed for dinner and the theatre, or whether she did not, she would let me know her movements at all costs. I know she would. That is why I am so certain there must have been—that there is something wrong."

He started from his chair and began to pace the room. I was very sorry for him, but I could not help remembering that he had earned this little discomfort. I was even more sorry for myself because I hadn't earned it.

"A great deal depends," I said soothingly, "on the habit of your house."

"What d'you mean ? I wish you wouldn't talk in riddles."

"I mean that every house has its habits ;

they are generally taken from the master of the house. If the master of the house is careful to lock up at night, the house will be carefully locked up even when he is away. On the other hand, if he overlooks such details, the remainder of his household will overlook them. The rule is practically invariable. Apply it, therefore, to the present case. If it is your custom to wire to Celia when you are staying late in town, then I shall advise you to take a special train to town and make a round of the hospitals. If, on the contrary, you are rather happy-go-lucky in this matter, be sure that Celia will be happy-go-lucky also."

"That's quite different!" snapped Austin. "And I'll thank you not to drag in silly jokes about hospitals."

"I was not joking. If you're in the habit of wiring to her on every occasion——"

"Oh, chuck that, can't you? Sometimes I wire and sometimes I don't. Women don't expect men to wire every time they miss a train."

"I suppose not. Odd, though, when you come to think it out, because women are supposed to have weaker nerves than men, and more vivid imaginations."

"That's nothing to do with it. They know very well that things crop up unexpectedly."

"I'm sure you'll find that a couple of tickets for the theatre have cropped up unexpectedly."

"I sincerely hope not. If that is her only reason for causing me all this anxiety, I feel that I should never forgive her. Now I'm going back home to see if there's any message, or if she's arrived. Will you come?"



"'This has gone far enough.'"

"Do you very much want me to come?"

"Yes, I do. I'm not fit to be left alone."

"All right, old fellow, I'm with you."

There was no message at the house, and, of course, no Celia. I hoped that we should sit down and rest a little, but we did not. We left at a smart pace for the station.

I will not weary you with a minute description of our movements during the next two hours. Meeting trains was never, to me, an exhilarating recreation, and I find even less amusement in it as the years pass by, especially after a fairly good dinner. Between the hours of ten and twelve that evening, I think Austin and I met twenty-three trains. Celia, light as a summer cloud and gay as a summer flower, floated out of the twenty-fourth.

She was not alone. Her companion was a Miss Summers. (Mentally I hyphenated the name, making it Several-Summers.) It was my privilege, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, to escort Miss Summers from the station to the house. It was a fine night, unfortunately; we all walked all the way.

Celia had not seemed to notice the gravity of Austin's face and demeanour. I could hear her rattling on behind me about the dinner and theatre, but I knew how nervous she must be feeling. Once or twice I dragged my steps a little in order to give them time to catch up, but they never did.

Miss Summers, evidently, had not the slightest idea that anything was wrong. I thought it better not to enlighten her. In all probability she took it for granted that Celia had duly obtained Austin's permission to dine in town and go to the theatre. I fervently hoped that she would not overhear any violent quarrelling or sobbing during the night.

Arrived at the house, Celia insisted that I should come in for a few minutes. Purely out of affection for her, I did so. She, Miss Summers, and I went into the dining-room. Austin marched straight up to his own den, immediately overhead. Ten minutes passed in chat and sandwiches; then we heard him calling for Celia.

I opened the door of the dining-room for her. "Courage!" I whispered. "Now for your master-stroke."

She did not reply. Her face was rather pale, but her eyes glittered and her lips twitched with excitement. I heard her run up the stairs and enter Austin's room.

Miss Summers prattled on about nothing whatever with tremendous zest, and I did my best to reply coherently. In reality I was waiting for some sound—I could not tell what it might be—that should summon me to the room overhead.

It came at last—a shrill cry from Celia, suddenly muffled; then the falling of some heavy object; after that, dead silence. Scarcely waiting to make my excuses to Miss Summers, I dashed up the stairs and into the den.

Celia was lying on the little sofa, her handkerchief to her eyes, her face buried in a cushion. Austin, his face very flushed, was picking up a chair that had been overturned.

"This has gone far enough," I said, having first closed the door behind me so that the servants should not overhear. "Perhaps I have no right to interfere, but I cannot allow Celia to suffer for something of which she is not really guilty. I want to tell you that *I* advised her to carry out this plan. It was my idea, and mine alone, that she should go to town without telling you beforehand, and return by a very late train. I may have been wrong—no doubt I was wrong—but my advice was well meant. I thought it only fair that you should know how it feels to be kept in——"

Austin raised his hand. "I wish to hear no more of this," he said. "If my wife and you have been concocting some plot or other, that is no affair of mine. As to her journey to town, I may as well inform you that I knew all about it this morning at breakfast."

"You knew all about it?" I gasped.

"Certainly. I also knew the precise train by which she intended to return, and that she was bringing Miss Summers with her."

"Oh, you did, did you?" I was so enraged that I could hardly articulate. "Then what the—the dickens did you mean by making me meet all those horrible trains?"

There came a shriek—just such a little shriek as I had heard before—from the sofa. That was enough. Without waiting for Austin's reply, I went down the stairs two at a time and out of the house. I heard them calling after me, but I would not look back.

"Never again!" I muttered, striding homewards at a great pace. "Never, never again!"



Photo by] ["*Topical.*"

THE BOBSLEIGH RUN AT ST. MORITZ: A CREW JUST STARTING.

WINTER PASTIMES.

By E. F. BENSON.

IT is of invariable occurrence that when in our usually sub-tropical winters there is the smallest chance of the smallest piece of ice bearing, the whole adjacent population, regardless of other duties and even pleasures, flocks out to it with skates of some description, in order to enjoy this infrequent amusement. Annually, so we regret to see, a certain number of people are drowned in premature attempts to use skates; annually, also, an enormous number of enthusiastic folk are either totally or partially submerged in icy though insufficiently frozen water, because they cannot bear to lose a possible minute of tumbling about on the elusive surface. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that to the average mind there must be something peculiarly attractive about skating. If we heard that a particular field "bore," we should not all of us instantly go out to walk on it, with the possible chance of being suffocated in the earth below if we went through, and the excellent chance of sinking in up to our knees in any case. No doubt the comparative rarity of this pursuit makes us more eager to enjoy these very occasional chances we get of indulging in it, but that alone would not be sufficient to account for the extraordinary rapidity with which the population makes for the frozen pond, or the extraordinary tardiness with which they leave it. In fact, there must be some inherent charm in skating—even though we put both feet down, and, in spite of that wise precaution, are the victims of the "frequent fall"—that makes us grab at any chance there may be of moving insecurely about on ice.

The reason is that the motion itself—that of sliding—is exquisite, even though the moments of gliding are punctuated by tumbles and collisions. We are accustomed to plod about at varying speeds on our feet, to roll about with carriage wheels or bicycle wheels below us; but who, except the dotard or the physically infirm, would dream of

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driving, or walking, or bicycling for purposes of pleasure if there was the chance of skating? For in skating, as, indeed, in the other winter sports to which it is akin, we enjoy a manner of locomotion which is the romance and the lyric of movement compared to the dull prose ground out by wheels or feet. Instead of stumping or rolling, we glide; friction—that acknowledged foe both to the pleasure of movement not less than of domestic life—is reduced to a minimum. That, too, is why we shall all fly so industriously in a year or two. Biplanes and monoplanes give movement without friction, except when they come to earth with undesigned rapidity, and give us our arrears of friction in one lump sum; but in no other branches of motion than these ice-sports, except perhaps in swimming, do we get the same delicious quality of movement. And since swimming to a large extent partakes of this, that is why, whenever there is a brief spell of warm weather in our sub-Arctic summers, everyone who can swim betakes himself to the water.

Nothing shows more clearly how deep-rooted is this pleasure in the movement of gliding than the consideration of what we cheerfully risk, or of the inconvenience we undergo in order to gratify our taste. The possible penalty of a drowning, the probable one of a ducking, does not the least deter the average youth from venturing on insecure surfaces; while others of us go, at considerable expense, to covered-in rinks, and then make small edges on a totally insufficient and overcrowded area. Others—and these are the wisest and most determined of all—think nothing of a journey to Switzerland in mid-winter in order to be able to practise their sport there in the open air, with plenty of room to fall down in and plentiful manners of falling, with no risk of drowning, and a benignant and probably amused sun to look down on their efforts and warm them up to fresh exertions.

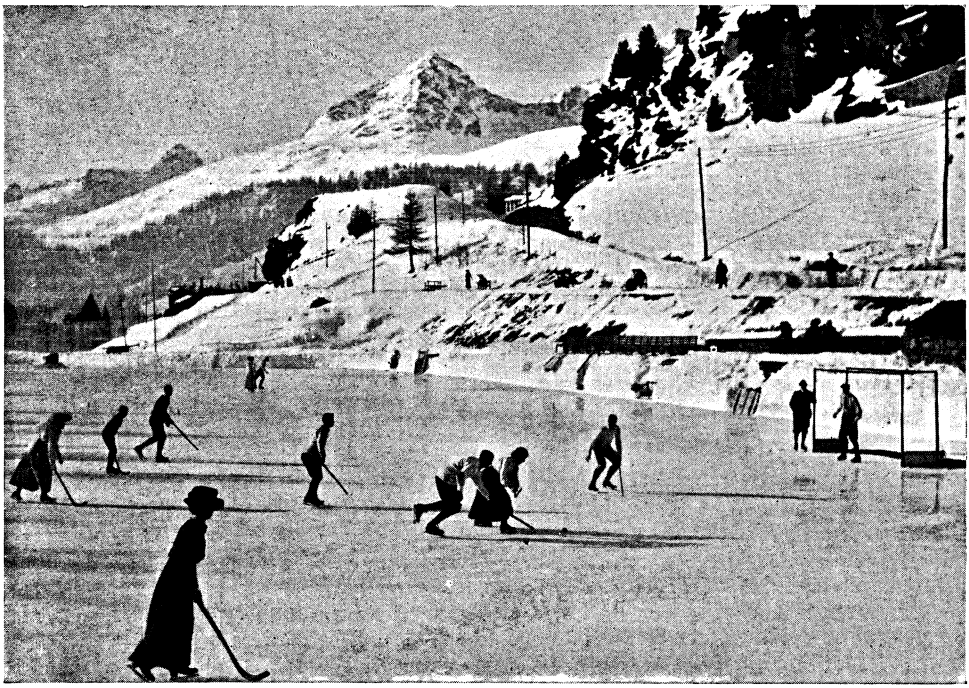


Photo by] [*Ballance, St. Moritz.*

BANDY ON THE ICE: LADIES V. MEN.

It is there in these high-Alp winter resorts, eyries between earth and heaven, that the three main winter pastimes, skating, tobogganing, and ski-ing (all gliding pursuits), can be enjoyed in perfection and under conditions which of themselves, without the addition of any of these pastimes at all, would be sufficient to make existence a day-long exhilaration. For the choking fogs and dark dampness of the smoky town—should we be so unfortunate as to pass our blind winters in London—we take in



Photo by] ["*Topical.*"

SKATING AT ST. MORITZ: ON THE KULM RINK.

exchange the turquoise skies of inimitable blue, and a great golden sun that marches across the azure field all day in unclouded triumph from the hour when he rises above the snow peaks in the steel-hued transparency of dawn till the time when he sets behind



Photo by] ["*Topical.*"

SKATING AT DAVOS.

the flushed and crimson spears of the western Alps. Instead of lugubrious wading in the black mud and slush of London roadways, we walk forth to our pastime here with squeak and crunch of trodden snow; instead of having grimy puddles squirted at us by thunder-wheeled motor-'buses, the worst assault that can here be made on us is when a fairy puff of crystalline frost-flower is flicked at us by some upspringing tuft of pine which the sun has loosened from its binding. Occasionally, it is true, clouds gather, and a snow-storm may blot out the mountain for a couple of days, but we succeed without effort in forgetting all about that the moment the sun appears again. Once last year, in the middle of January, as this writer remembers, it rained. That was an outrage which it was not possible to allude to. There was probably some mistake; it did it by accident, not of malice.

Such are the conditions under which you have your fill of that divine winter pastime—the dry, frosty air—which everyone says is



DRIVING A WILLING TEAM.
Two photographs by Ballance, St. Moritz.

like champagne, though there is no kind of resemblance between the two—a sun that warms the inmost marrow of your bones, and the circle of pine wood crowned by great peaks to look on. And, if you choose to skate, there is no question as to whether the ice bears or whether you risk an immersion, for the rink is built up solid from the ground—a stretch of flawless ice obtained by continued floodings of a prepared and levelled place. Every night, too, when the skaters are gone home, and the rink has been carefully swept, the surface is flooded again or sprinkled with the hose, so that every morning a virgin sheet of ice lies waiting. And then, even if eternal youth was yours, and the glacial age descended again, so that you could skate from January to December, there would probably be some fresh intricacy of turn or edge to master; while, if you had three similarly endowed companions, it is



CAPTAIN DWYER, SECOND IN THE GRAND NATIONAL RACE, ST. MORITZ.

certain that you would find some fresh weaving of figures in your combined sets.

The second of the three winter sports is tobogganing—a pursuit generally understood to have something to do with a tea-tray and a mound in the back-garden. But in Switzerland things are managed on a rather larger scale, and on your light iron sledge you whirl down miles of snow beaten hard by traffic. That is tobogganing in its simplest and most unsophisticated form; but, as in the case of the skating rink, art lends its aid, and at most of those Swiss winter resorts prepared roads are made either of beaten-down snow, or, in the swiftest and most exciting form, tracks banked up to take you round corners without running out are every evening sprinkled with water, so that the surface is hard, smooth ice. And when, on the Cresta run, for instance, at St. Moritz, you see a padded figure face downwards on a skeleton or giant toboggan whirl round the steep side of the banks at "Battledore" or



Photo by] [*Ballance, St. Moritz.*

AN UPHILL FINISH ON THE TRACK AT ST. MORITZ.

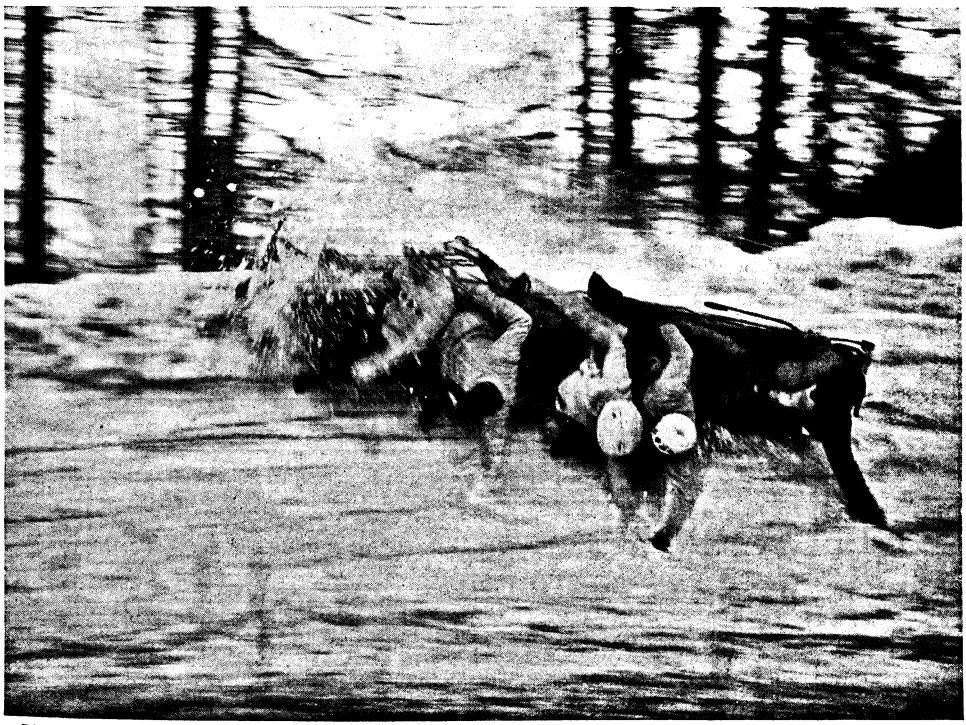


Photo by] [*Ballance, St. Moritz.*

A NASTY SPILL AT HORSESHOE CORNER, ON THE BOBSLEIGH RUN.

"Shuttlecock," clinging like a fly to the steep wall of ice by sheer centrifugal force, or going down the last breathless descent at a speed that takes him high up the slope opposite, you will realise that there is a thrill and romance possible in mere motion which you have never hitherto suspected.

In both these branches of winter pastimes, constructive art has to prepare the playground of delight; in the third — ski-ing — you

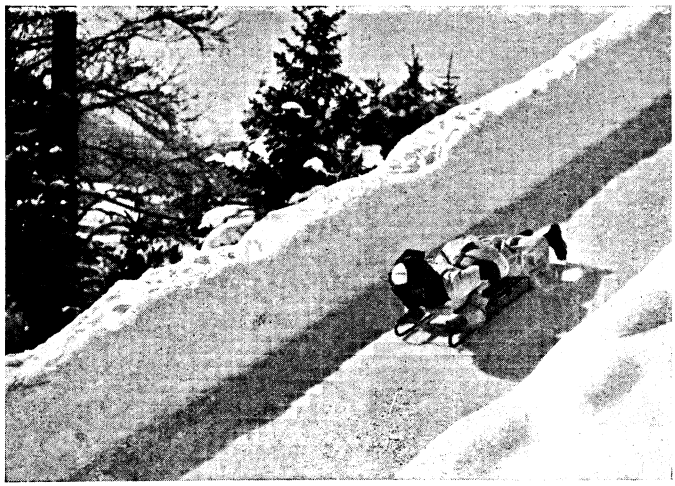


MR. BOTT STARTING ON HIS WINNING COURSE IN THE GRAND NATIONAL RACE ON THE CRESTA RUN.



MR. BOTT, WINNER OF THE GRAND NATIONAL RACE THREE YEARS IN SUCCESSION, ON THE CRESTA RUN.

deal with snow-covered slopes in their natural state, and the more untouched they are, the better you are pleased. The skis themselves are strips of wood, from six to seven feet long and a few inches broad. They are fastened to the boots of the skier, who stands on them as on skates. Since they are smooth and polished on their under surface, and, owing to their length and the distribution of the skier's weight, do not sink deeply into the snow, it will be easily demonstrated by trial that if you put them on and stand on a steep hillside covered with crusted snow, the skis—and you on them—will instantly begin to slide down the hill with ever-increasing velocity. Then a variety of complicated things may happen: you may cross your ski-toes, and will at once fall violently sideways and forwards



MISS WHEBLE WINNING THE LADIES' GRAND NATIONAL ON THE CRESTA RUN.

Three photographs by Ballance, St. Moritz.

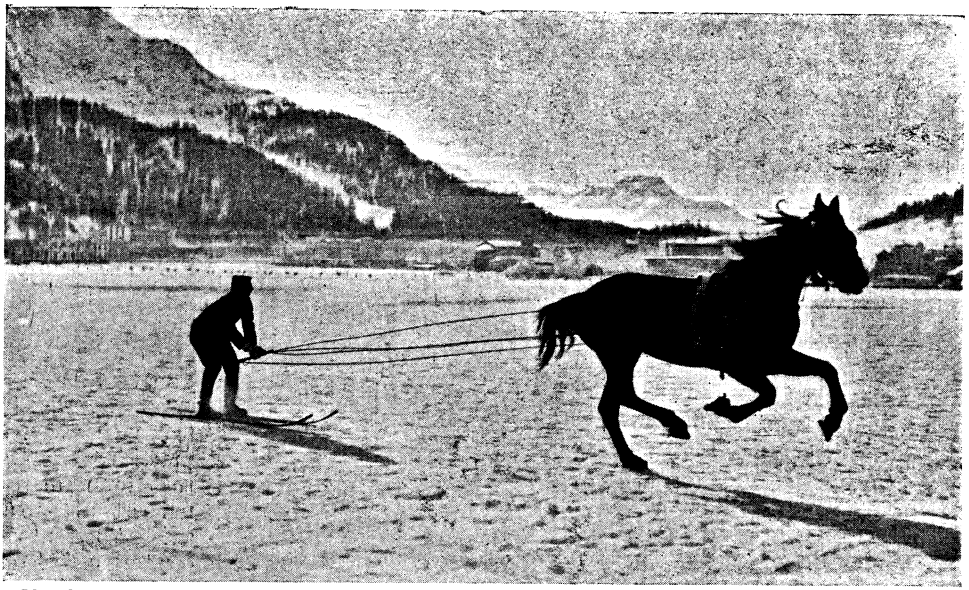


Photo by] [*Ballance, St. Moritz.*

SKI-ING ON ST. MORITZ LAKE.

in the snow ; your two feet may develop an inexplicable tendency to travel in different directions away from each other, and you will fall sideways or backwards ; you may run into some hollow or inequality on your hillside, and will weave yourself and your skis into strange knots. Or—and this delightful result will occur more and more constantly as you persevere—you will manage to stand fairly upright with your feet running in parallel lines, and you will hiss down your slope, with the snow spreading in feathers



Photo by] [*Ballance, St. Moritz.*

SKI-ING AT FULL SPEED.



Photo by] ["Topical."

SKI JUMPING COMPETITION AT ST. MORITZ.

you would sink up to your knees if you attempted to walk over it, passing lightly and easily over the surface, and do it all over again. By degrees you will learn the craft of your new art, tracing—with the help of the long pole you carry to steady yourself with—curving paths between obstacles, or practising turns, so that even in the midst of your swiftest descent you can turn completely round to right or left and face the upward slope again. And then, if you are very young, and strong, and brave, you will learn to jump on those long wooden boats, descending at full speed on your hillside to where a little artificial platform has been banked up in the snow. Over the edge of frozen powder round your toes, like foam from the bows of a racing yacht, until you arrive at the bottom of your slope. Then, with ever-increasing facility, you will mount your slope again over snow into which



Photo by] [*Ballance, St. Moritz.*

A CURLING MATCH.

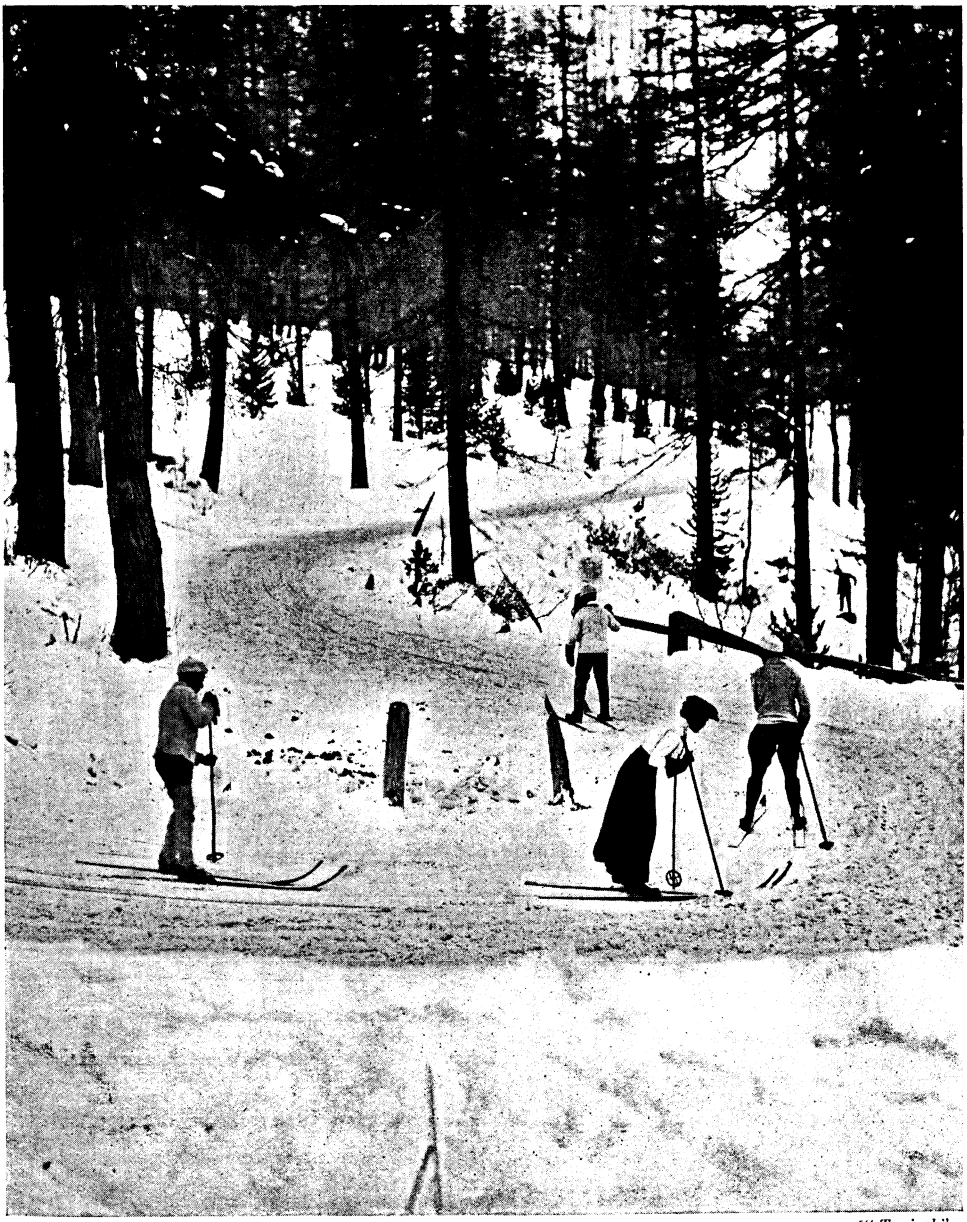


Photo by] [" *Topical.*"

A SKI-ING EXPEDITION.

of this you will fly into the empty air, touching ground again yards down on the continued slope.

Or, without being young or brave at all, you will set out in the morning with provender for the day, and, leaving the path, mount over fields of white untrodden snow till the pines are left below, and the shoulders of mountains that looked so high above you have melted into hummocks beneath your feet, and you ascend, you and your companions, and still ascend into the silence of the holy hills. Mixed with the climbing you will have swift ecstatic runs into collateral valleys, flashing from sunshine into the clear blue shadow of pine woods, and opposite you all the time the aiguilles of Chamounix and the great dome

of Mont Blanc, clear-cut and crystalline, will climb with you. And there is more reward to come than even this thrill of penetrating into those white solitary places, for as the afternoon shadows begin to lengthen you will turn your face homeward again, and skim down over the snowfields with the hiss of frozen sprays, and in your heart the joy of the sun and the peace of the world and the ecstasy of motion and living.

It is not in any one of these multifarious factors in the great affairs of winter sports that the joy resides, for they all contribute to it. There is the sun, first of all, shining through perfectly dry, cold air. By some wonderful alchemy he takes the shiver out of the frost and leaves there the briskness. Then there is the perpetual snow—not snow as we understand it in England, a grey substance spotted with dirt which turns into muddy water when touched, but a fine dry powder that brushes off like dust, and leaves neither dirt nor damp behind. Then there are huge white mountains to look at, with black pine-woods on the lower slopes and a flawless blue sky bounding them above. All these things produce a feeling of vigour and health which predisposes to activity, and the methods of gratifying them are of the most delightful kind, for they are concerned with gliding at high speed. You may tumble and fall on your skates, you may be thrown head first out of your toboggan, or sideways from your skis into deep drifts of snow, but no thought of resentment at these accidents enters your head. For a minute or two, indeed, you may wonder if you are hurt—or perhaps there may be no cause to wonder—yet all the time you know you do not care, and will before long be inviting another such injury by all the means in your power. And when the day is over, you are hungry for dinner and sleepy for bed, and in consequence probably sit up half the night dancing. Then in the morning you make haste to get breakfast over in order to do it all over again.

Yes, a joyful affair!



Photo by] ["*Topical.*"

AWAITING THEIR TURN TO GO DOWN THE CRESTA RUN.



"THE SURRENDER OF CALAIS, 1347: QUEEN PHILIPPA INTERCEDING WITH KING EDWARD FOR THE CITIZENS." BY R. E. PINE.

ENGLAND'S STORY IN PORTRAIT AND PICTURE.

XIII. EDWARD III., THE BLACK PRINCE, AND THEIR FRENCH WARS.

FOR three years after the deposition of Edward II., the coronation of his youthful son in his stead, and the subsequent murder of the hapless father, the boy-king who was destined to become famous under the title of Edward III. was largely subject to the ascendancy of the queen-mother, Isabella, and Roger Mortimer, who practically controlled the official "Council of Regency," which consisted of four bishops and ten of the greater barons.

Not yet admitted to any real power in the State, the fifteen-year-old king, as befitted the future victor of Crecy, turned his attention to military matters. After the failure of the first Edward to realise his great project for the complete subjugation of Scotland, and the ensuing further defeat of English hopes at Bannockburn in the reign of his successor, a truce had been made between the two countries; but it was now broken, and several raids by the Scots across the border speedily developed into actual war. Dauntless as ever, King Robert Bruce gathered his vassals around him, determined to gain for Scotland a full and final acknowledgment of independence. Upwards of twenty-five thousand men assembled on the banks of the Tweed. Edward thereupon led his forces across the border; but the Scots fell back before him, retiring into regions where he could not further pursue them, as the whole district was stripped of supplies. James Douglas, attacking the king's camp by night, inflicted a serious reverse on him; and then, for the second time, the Scots abandoned their camp and retired. Edward was compelled to disband his army at York, and returned to London. Peace was arranged in the summer of 1328, when Parliament met, and, in a treaty then signed, the independence of Scotland was formally recognised. A marriage was arranged between the four-year-old Prince David,



EDWARD III., KING OF ENGLAND 1327–1377.
Engraved by George Vertue from an old painting in the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle.

Robert Bruce's son and heir, and the Princess Joanna, the sister of Edward III., then six years of age, thereafter popularly known as "Joan Makepeace." In the following summer Robert Bruce died.

Soon afterwards the boy-king married Philippa, second daughter of the Count of Hainault, to whom he had been betrothed three years previously, during the sojourn of his mother Isabella in France. Queen Philippa subsequently became the mother of a son destined to achieve fame in history as Edward the Black Prince.

By this time the policy and conduct of the regents, the queen-mother and Roger Mortimer, had aroused general dissatisfaction. Mortimer had learned no wisdom from the fate of such favourites of royalty as Gaveston and the Despensers, and, though enriched with the estates of the latter, bore himself with an arrogance and a greed of further power which soon made him an object of detestation to baronage and populace alike.

The summons to the Parliaments at York and Northampton, at which the independence of Scotland was formally ratified, was disregarded by the principal barons, whose absence testified their disapproval; and, as Lingard shows, the people loudly execrated the inconsistent conduct of those who advised the young king to renounce his claim to the Scottish crown, though they had made it a capital charge against the younger Despenser that he had not succeeded in winning the same crown for his royal master, Edward II.

As Mortimer more and more sought to supersede the other members of the Council of Regency in authority and power, there developed several movements to depose him from his position, the first being headed by the Earl of Lancaster, the official "protector" of the young king, and the next by the Earl of Kent, younger son of the great Edward I., who now lost his life on the scaffold for resistance to the rapacious Mortimer.

At last the king, now a youth of eighteen, was strong enough to take action against the misrule of his regents, with plentiful support for his action from Parliament and the country generally. Mortimer was arrested, tried, and hanged at Tyburn, and the queen-mother was detained in seclusion for the remainder of her lifetime.

The real rule of the third Edward now began, and its first activities were concerned with the renewed problem of Scottish independence. James of Douglas and the Earl of Moray, regent for the young David, passed away soon after their master, Robert



PHILIPPA OF HAINAULT, WIFE OF EDWARD III.
From a contemporary bust in Bristol Cathedral.



"THE CORONATION OF EDWARD III., 1327." BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.

Bruce, and the new regent, the Earl of Mar, had neither the military nor the statesmanlike abilities of his predecessor. Certain disaffected nobles invited Edward Baliol—a son of the weak king John Baliol—from Normandy, and proclaimed him as rightful candidate for the crown against the boy David. The regent Mar and the Earl of March advanced at the head of two considerable forces against the invaders,

who landed on the Fifeshire coast. Baliol managed to intercept the two armies and completely routed them, inflicting heavy loss owing to the disadvantageous position into which he and his troops managed to throw them. The regent Mar was among the dead, and six weeks later, after many old adherents of his house had rallied to his banner, Baliol was crowned at Scone. Feeling his tenure of the throne insecure, of peace, and the countenance given to the young King David and Queen Joan at the French Court became a fresh incentive to the English King's latent feud with France.

For Edward III. had substituted for his grandfather's passion for the conquest of Scotland the still more grandiose determination to annex the crown of France. He was led into his French war by the never-ending attempts made on his Duchy of Aquitaine



EDWARD III. SENDS HIS CHALLENGE TO PHILIP DE VALOIS, KING OF FRANCE, 1336.

THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN AND OTHERS WHO VOWED TO WEAR A PATCH OVER ONE EYE UNTIL THEY HAD PERFORMED SOME GALLANT DEED OF ARMS.

From an early illuminated MS.

however, he paid fealty to Edward III., thus incurred the opposition of many powerful Scottish noblemen, and eventually had to take refuge at the English Court. In 1333 an English army was led by Edward to reassert his cause, and a great defeat of the Scottish forces at Halidon Hill routed the patriotic party and restored Baliol to the throne. Within two years, however, Baliol was again a fugitive, and Edward again but partially overawed the disturbers by the French King, and by the help that monarch gave to his Scottish enemies, and by desire less of foreign conquest than of alleged inheritance from his maternal grandfather, Philip IV.

Yet even if the Salic law were to be waived and a woman's right to the French crown acknowledged, Edward's claim would not have stood, since that of Charles, King of Navarre, would have had precedence, his mother being the daughter of Louis X.,



"THE ENCOUNTER OF EDWARD III. WITH GODEMAR DE FAYE AT THE RIVER SOMME, 1346." BY SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A.



"CRECY, 1346: THE CHARGE OF THE FRENCH CAVALRY ON TO THE ENGLISH BOWMEN." BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.

eldest son of Philip IV., whilst Isabella, Edward III.'s mother, was but the youngest child of Philip IV. Edward, however, was determined to make good his claim by conquest, if possible, and thus began that series of campaigns, known as the Hundred Years' War, between the two countries, which ended in 1449 with the expulsion of the English from France and the loss of all their territory there with the exception of Calais, which they held until 1558. On the by-plots of this time, which involved the smaller countries, we have here no space to dilate, and must pass over the parts taken by Flanders, Savoy, Bruges, Ghent, and Bavaria.

There were give-and-take encounters, with shouts of jubilation and of victory from first one side and then the other. There were temporary truces patched up by the Pope and other mediators. In 1340 the French fleet burnt Southampton and controlled the Channel, and the English fleet retaliated and almost destroyed the French fleet at the battle of Sluys.

After this naval victory a truce was arranged, but in the following year John, Duke of Brittany, died childless, and rival



EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE, 1330–1376.
From an old painting.

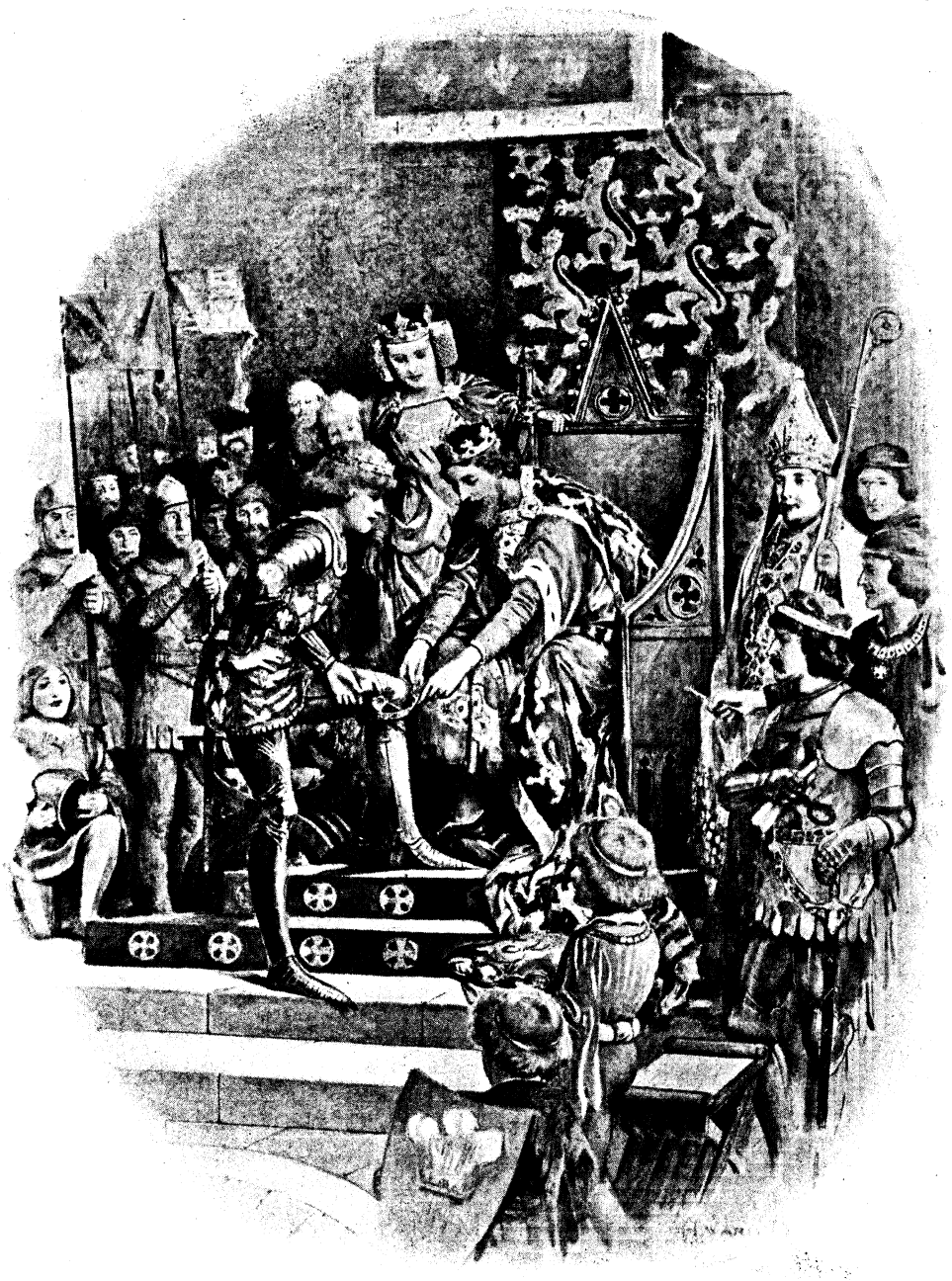


THE FIRST PRINCESS OF WALES—JOAN, DAUGHTER OF THE EARL OF KENT, AND GRAND-DAUGHTER OF EDWARD I., CALLED "THE FAIR MAID OF KENT," WIFE TO EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE, AND MOTHER OF RICHARD II.

claimants to his title were his niece, the wife of Charles of Blois, nephew to Philip of Valois, and John, Count of Montfort, who secured the support of the English King. By reason of this alliance, which renewed open hostilities between England and France, there landed on French soil English troops who were destined not to return home for many ensuing years.

Then, in 1346, Edward and his son, the Black Prince, landed near Cape la Hogue at the head of a far stronger army than had yet taken the field on French soil from England.

Philip of Valois put himself at the head of the largest force he could muster; and as the English army passed along the left bank of the Seine, Philip marched along the right, destroying all bridges by which the English might be able to cross the stream. Edward continued his course along the bank towards Paris, and then, suddenly wheeling round, caused his bowmen to clear the remains of the bridge at Poissy, and, having crossed to the right bank, continued his march. Thereupon Philip hastened along the line of the Somme, to prevent the English from passing that river. Presently the English found themselves in a disadvantageous position between the River Somme



"INVESTITURE OF EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE WITH THE ORDER OF THE GARTER, 1350."
BY HOWARD DAVIE.

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and the sea, and pursued by Philip's army of one hundred thousand men, six times the number of the English force. A peasant showed the English King the ford of Blanche-Taque, where Edward took his forces across, and inflicted a crushing defeat on a large contingent of the French army commanded by Sir Godemar de Faye.

Edward despatched some troops in pursuit of Godemar, but himself took up his camp

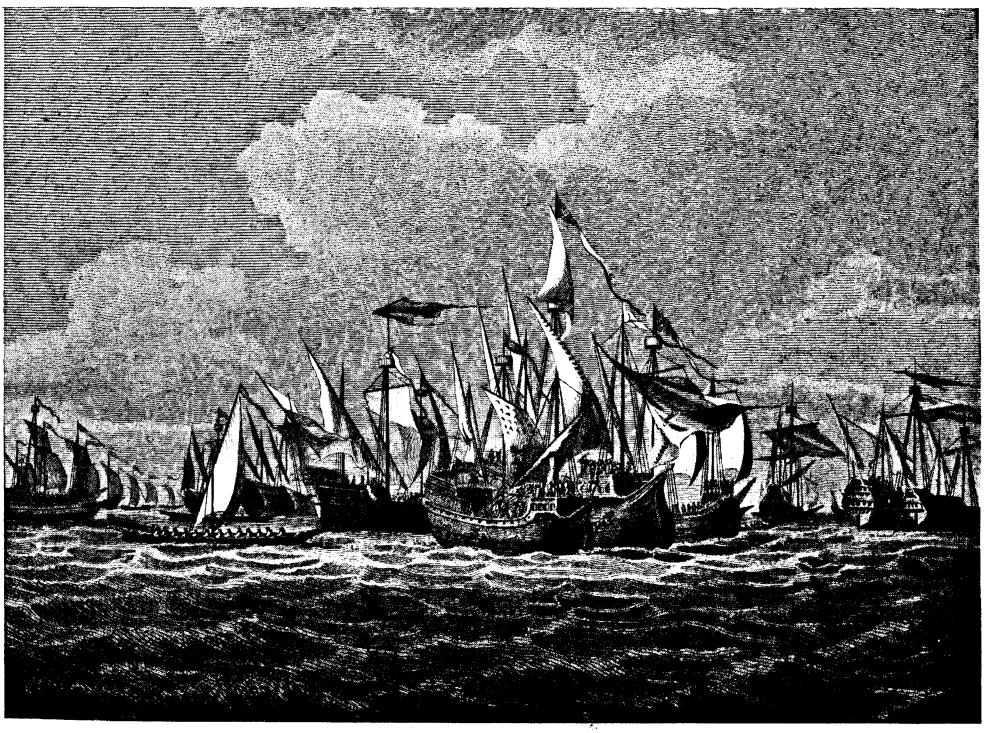
in the fields between Crotoy and Crecy, drawing up his forces in a strong position on some rising ground near Crecy.

Philip arrived the next day, having awaited further forces from Savoy. There was no order or arrangement in the marching and movements of his mighty host; everything was hurried, and there was an utter want of method in the evolutions of the various corps.

The Genoese crossbow-men of Philip's army, fifteen thousand strong, opened the attack, but could not stand their ground against the tremendous impact of the English troops. One division of the English army was given to the Black Prince—so called from the colour of the armour he wore—then only sixteen years old. In one of the fiercest moments of the conflict, the Earl of Warwick sent Sir Thomas Norwich to the king to ask for a reinforcement. Edward inquired if his son were killed or wounded. "No," replied the messenger. "Then," said the king, "tell Warwick that he shall have no assistance; let the boy win his spurs. He and those who have him in charge shall earn the whole glory of the day." Among those left dead on the field was the blind John, King of Bohemia, whose motto, "*Ich Dien*," with his crest of three feathers, was thenceforth borne by the Prince of Wales.

In the general rout, King Philip, with a few of his staff, escaped to Amiens as dusk fell, the battle having raged since three o'clock in the afternoon. The loss on the French side had been disastrous. Eleven royal princes were left dead on the field. Among them the Kings of Bohemia and Majorca had fallen, with Philip's brother, the Count of Alençon, the Dukes of Lorraine and Bourbon, the Counts of Flanders, Blois, Vaudemont, and Aumale, together with twelve hundred knights, fifteen thousand gentlemen, four thousand men-at-arms, and thirty thousand common soldiers—a total nearly twice as large as the entire opposing force.

From the battlefield of Crecy, Edward marched northward along the coast, and five days afterwards began the blockade of Calais. In the course of that period, the Earl of Derby and Sir Walter Manny were victorious in Southern France, sallying forth from Bordeaux and devastating the country as far as Poictiers. In Northern France,



"THE ENGLISH VICTORY OVER THE SPANISH FLEET, 1350."
From an old engraving.

too, the brave Countess Joan de Montfort, Edward's ally, defeated Charles of Blois—who was taken prisoner and sent to the Tower of London—and maintained Brittany for her son. After the English victory at Crecy, King Philip, probably for the purpose of forcing the English King to hasten home, had opened up negotiations with Scotland; and David Bruce, who had four years earlier been restored to the throne, taking advantage of Edward's absence, as ally of France invaded England, to be met at Neville's Cross, near Durham, by Queen Philippa, where his army was defeated and he himself

leaguered city, and Calais at last displayed the flag of Edward's own design, the *fleur-de-lis* being quartered with the leopards. Sir Walter Manny, the deliverer of Hennebon, and other nobles, pleaded for the garrison and inhabitants, and Edward so far agreed to waive his right of conquest as to say that if six of the principal burgesses came into the camp bareheaded and barefoot, with halters round their necks and the keys of the town in their hands, he would punish them as victims and show mercy to the rest. How Eustace de St. Pierre was the first to stake his life for those of his countrymen,



"THE BATTLE OF CRECY, 1346: THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY AND HIS FORCES ROUTED BY ENGLISH TROOPS UNDER LORD TALBOT." BY T. GRAINGER.

was taken prisoner and carried to London. After this the queen followed Edward to Calais, which town stubbornly held out for over eleven months. John de Vienne, the governor, was reduced to driving forth from the town nearly two thousand of the aged men and women and children, whom Edward permitted to pass through his camp, giving them a meal and even money for their journey. But when the invested town ejected another five hundred of its citizens, Edward's generosity was baulked by his anger at the continued siege, and they perished miserably between their native walls and the besieging camp. King Philip endeavoured in vain to relieve the be-

and how five others followed suit, and Queen Philippa successfully interceded for them—this theme has been graphically shown in many a picture.

A truce between France and England followed the capture of Calais; then internal terror, in the shape of the Black Death, rose up in England itself. Fifty thousand people in London alone are said to have perished.

Yet since where there are kings there must be courts, courtly life went on in spite of the devastations of the plague; and it was during this time, when the Black Death raged, that great preparations were made to inaugurate the Order of the Garter in 1350,



"THE BATTLE OF POICTIERS, 1356: THE LAST STAND OF KING JOHN OF FRANCE." BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.



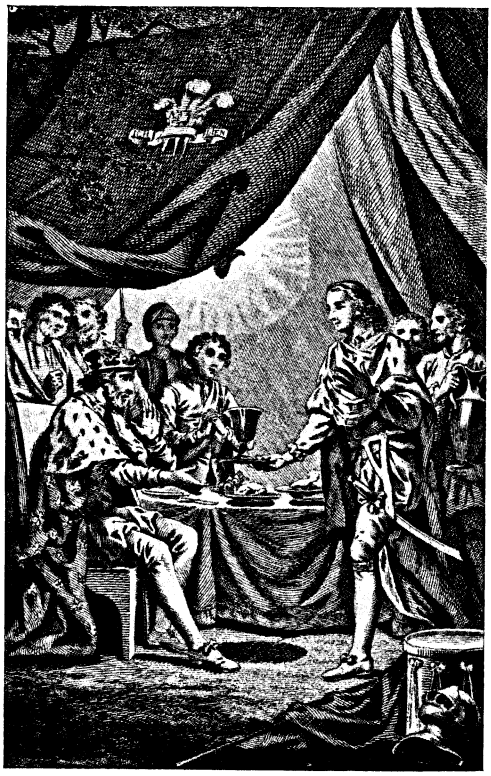
EDWARD III. IN OLD AGE.
From an engraving.

and in the same year Edward and his navy won a victory over a marauding Spanish fleet.

The prospect of an early renewal of the war with France, however, made Edward extremely desirous of arranging the Scottish situation more satisfactorily, for the Scots had been quick to take advantage of the opportunities for hostilities offered by the English King's French wars. In 1355 the Black Prince advanced through Southern France with a force of sixty thousand men, and, after plundering Carcasonne and Narbonne, led back his army to Bordeaux. King Edward, meanwhile, landed in the north of France, and tried in vain to bring the French King to a battle. The Scots chose this moment to recover Berwick and march across the border, so that Edward was forced to quit France with all possible speed to fight the enemy within his own gates. Once more he took Berwick, and subsequently purchased Edward Baliol's vague rights to the Scottish throne for a sum of ready money and an annuity of two thousand pounds. After advancing as far as Edinburgh, however, Edward was compelled, by want of provisions, to return southward, as the Scots avoided a pitched battle in the field. They inflicted a disastrous vengeance upon him, however, by hovering in the rear of his army and cutting off all stragglers. This pursuit, continued beyond the border, many villages in northern England being set on fire by the exasperated Scots, became known as "Burnt Candlemas," from the time of year at which it took place.

The truce with France ceased in 1355, and the French war was renewed. Philip of Valois was dead, and John, his son, now occupied the French throne; and when the Black Prince pierced into the heart of France with twelve thousand men under his command, he encountered King John with an army of sixty thousand men, and defeated them at the memorable battle of Poictiers. The glory of France was eclipsed, the victory of the English was complete, and the French King and many of his nobles were taken prisoners.

That evening the King of France was entertained to supper in the tent of the victorious English Prince, who himself waited on his guest with the most chivalrous courtesy. There the Black Prince concluded a truce with Charles the Dauphin, the king's eldest son, and, in the spring of 1357,



"EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE WAITING ON HIS ROYAL PRISONER, JOHN, KING OF FRANCE, AFTER DEFEATING HIM AT POICTIERS, 1356."
BY SAMUEL WALE.

conducted John and the young Philip to London, where they made their entrance, amid the acclamations of the people, as illustrious guests rather than prisoners, the King of France mounted on a richly caparisoned war-horse, while the Prince of Wales rode modestly on a small palfrey.

By this time, however, Edward seems to have begun to realise that his vague claim to the French throne would never be admitted in France, and that conquest was too ambitious a vision. He therefore offered to release the French King in return for a large ransom and the restoration to the English crown of the French possessions of Henry II. and of Eleanor of Aquitaine, to be held in independent sovereignty by the English King without any obligations of feudal homage or service to France. King John eventually yielded every point, but the French nation repudiated the treaty, and the year 1359 found Edward once again in France at the head of a large force. From Calais he penetrated into the country, plundering and laying waste wherever he passed; and after a spirited but unsuccessful effort to reduce Rheims by siege, and a victory over the Duke of Burgundy, whom he compelled to pay a large indemnity and to undertake to remain neutral in the struggle, he marched upon Paris itself and encamped before the capital. He was, however, not sufficiently strong to besiege it, and was obliged, by scarcity of provisions, to fall back upon Brittany, losing many men and horses in the retreat, owing to the hardships of the winter.

Then, in 1360, came the peace of Brétigny, made between Edward III. and the Dauphin Charles. By it France surrendered to England Gascony, Guienne, and Poitou, Saintonge, Perigord, Limoges, and other counties in the south; Montreuil, Guisnes, Ponthieu, and Calais in the north, freed from all feudal claims. Edward finally renounced all claim to the throne of France and to sovereignty in Normandy, Touraine, Anjou, and Maine, and agreed to release King John on payment of a ransom of three million crowns.



"THE BLACK PRINCE ENTERING LONDON, WITH THE CAPTIVE FRENCH KING, 1357."

Reproduced from an engraving published by Messrs. Virtue & Co.

Three years later, the ransom failing to be raised, King John returned to England and again surrendered himself into Edward's custody, and in 1364 died in London, and was succeeded by his son, the Dauphin, as Charles V.

After the peace of Brétigny, the Black Prince took up his residence at Bordeaux as

governor of his father's remaining possessions in France, and there he championed the cause of Don Pedro the Cruel, King of Castile, and marched in an evil hour into Spain. Success, as usual, attended him; but Pedro broke all pledges to pay his troops, and, unable to defray the expenses of the expedition, the Black Prince proceeded to levy a tax upon his French subjects. They appealed to France—to Charles V.—and Charles, as feudal superior, demanded the presence of the Black Prince, who replied that he would come, but at the head of sixty thousand men. King Edward, now an old man and inclined to peace, offered to surrender a part of the territory guaranteed to him by the treaty of Brétigny; but Charles, considering this offer a sign of weakness, became the more aggressive, and the war was resumed.

The increasing ill-health of the Black Prince left the conduct of the war, on the English side, to John of Gaunt, and in 1374 a peace was arranged as the result of the intervention of the Pope. By this treaty Bordeaux, Bayonne, certain towns in the south, and the fortress of Calais in the north, formed all the dominions in France that remained to King Edward after his many years of warfare.

The year 1376 is marked by the advance of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, to the virtual head of the English Government, for by then Edward III. had fallen into a feeble and dishonoured old age. His devoted wife, Queen Philippa, died in 1369, and after her death the increasing ascendancy at the court of one of her ladies-in-waiting, Alice Perrers, was the cause of great dissatisfaction to the aged king's subjects, and even became a matter for official interference by Parliament. But Edward, "the mighty victor" of Gray's sonorous ode, worn out by warfare, lagged superfluous on the throne, "an almost passive spectator," as Mr. Sidney Low describes him, not only of the growing conflict between the barons and the Church, but even of the immediate collision between "The Good Parliament" and the faction of John of Gaunt.

The Black Prince, though marked out by disease for an early grave, still struggled to take an active part in State affairs, and even headed an Opposition in Parliament. But he was at length compelled by failing health to retire from public life, and the chief power fell into the hands of the Duke of Lancaster, who was unpopular with the nation at large. In 1376 the Black Prince died at the early age of forty-five.

The Parliament was dissatisfied with the Administration, and the country generally groaned under the excessive taxation necessitated by the ruinously expensive and now finally unprofitable wars in France. Several of the aged king's nearest advisers were summarily removed from office by Parliament, and John of Gaunt's chief agents were impeached and dismissed. After a lengthy course of interference and readjustment, Parliament demanded that Richard of Bordeaux, the ten-year-old son of the Black Prince, should be presented to the nation as heir to the throne, the intention apparently being to check any designs upon the crown that might be cherished by John of Gaunt. The power of that able statesman, however, remained outwardly unshaken until he forfeited some measure of it by strongly supporting the cause of John Wycliffe, the Leicestershire priest who was later to become famous as the forerunner of the Reformation.

Further disaffection was aroused by one of the two last official acts of Edward's reign, which took the form of the levying of a poll-tax of fourpence a head on the entire population, except beggars, the reason urged being that, as the truce with France was about to expire, new expenditure was necessary for a renewal of hostilities, despite the fact that England no longer owned enough French territory to inspire the nation with any confidence in schemes of reconquest. The completion of the king's jubilee, in February, 1377, was marked by the granting of an amnesty for minor offences. In the following June one of the greatest of English monarchs breathed his last at Sheen, deserted not only by his courtiers, but even by his servants, in their haste to be gone from the palace, which they had already stripped of its valuables.

This series of articles, which began in the Christmas Number for 1909, will be continued in ensuing issues throughout the coming year. The fourteenth article will appear in the January Number, and will present a varied group of pictures illustrating the reign of Richard the Second.

THE NIGHT SURPRISE.

By HALLIWELL SUTCLIFFE.

IT was a fine June evening, and sunset was flushing Exeter's quiet streets with unaccustomed warmth and tenderness, as the London coach swept up the hill and turned into the courtyard of the tavern known as La Belle Sauvage. There were few passengers, and among them was a figure which even in a crowd would have been conspicuous—the figure of a lad a little more than twenty, tall and lean-built, with a face of surprising charm and melancholy.

The lad was tanned by the Devon sun, and there was the countryman's air in the hesitancy with which he crossed the courtyard, entered the tavern, and ordered his lodging for the night. It was plain that he was more used to lanes and fieldways than to the bustle and commotion of a busy hostelry.

When he had washed the traces of the hot, dusty road away and changed his linen with a certain fastidious care, he came down into the coffee-room, and, while he waited for his chop and pint of claret to be brought in, he strolled to the bow-window looking out on the courtyard. The room was untenanted, save for a waiting-maid or two who flitted in and out, making bustle from sheer habit, though at present there was little call upon their services.

The lad stood quietly at the window, looking at the ostlers and stable-boys outside, but not seeing them. He had been in the city less than an hour, and already his thoughts were back in the Devon countryside—Devon, with the warm, salt winds that blew over his father's house of Mortcombe, with the deep lanes that had led his boyhood's steps into paths of fancy and romantic daring; Devon, whose name would be music to him while his life lasted.

He went over, point by point, the happenings of the past year—his friendship with the parson of Mortcombe village; his first sight of Dorothy Tresize, the Parson's daughter, as she returned from two years of school in London; his headstrong courtship. The whole breadth and sweeping liberty of Devon returned to him as he recalled his wooing, the scent of the uplands and the fragrance of the sheltered hollows, the lowing of the good red kine, the fret and uproar of the sea as the tide crept into the pleasant havens of the coast. Dorothy and he had been like children, aware of a great happiness, and asking nothing further as to ways and means.

Then his father, whom he loved, had set a rough hand on his shoulder and had sent him out into the wilderness. Sir Aylmer Combe, of Mortcombe, was spendthrift and good-humoured, and a child might lead him in some matters; but his pride was stubborn, and he had mapped out his son's marriage already. In his own bluff, high-handed way Sir Aylmer had gone down to the parsonage, had compelled the Vicar—whose pride, too, was sensitive—to take Dorothy with him for a brief holiday; and two days later, as they sat at breakfast, he told Aylmer the younger that his valise was packed, and that he would take the coach to London in an hour's time.

"But, father, why?" the boy had asked, with sudden fire.

"Why? Because I bid you, sir! Why else? In my young days the unlicked cubs did not ask why. Fathers were obeyed in those days, sir!"

"But what errand do you send me on to London?"

"Oh, the innocent, quiet boy I've reared to be my heir! What errand? To see the town, Aylmer; to stretch your wings a bit—to see life before you settle down to marriage. There are papers here; they'll give you introduction to a few good names in London, the byways you must find out for yourself. Dine well, Aylmer, and crack a watchman on the head—do anything to cure yourself of this mooning up and down the Devon lanes."

Aylmer, as he stood in the window-space fronting the courtyard of La Belle Sauvage, wondered how he had found grace enough, loyalty enough, to obey his father's blunt command. He had promised to meet Dorothy that morning at the dip in the

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uplands where the badgers had their caves. For a moment—a sharp, bitter moment—he had been tempted to throw off allegiance to his father, to decline point blank to stir from Devonshire. And then a sudden weakness—or a sudden strength—had come to him. He had risen from the table, and grasped Sir Aylmer's hand.

"I'll go, sir; but I shall go by the way of the vicarage. I tell you so."

"Oh, yes; but hasten your farewells, Aylmer," the older man had chuckled. "The London coach and tide wait for no man."

And Aylmer had gone hot-foot to the vicarage, had learned that Parson Tresize and Dorothy were gone to Exeter on a three days' visit; and he had stood still for a moment on the threshold, incredulous and chilled at heart, until the pert serving-maid began to smile at his transparent gloom.

"They—the Vicar left no message for me?" he had stammered.

"None, sir," she had answered. "Miss Dorothy was in tears when they left," she added shrewdly.

"In tears?" he had broken in with a sudden, boyish smile. "You are sure she was in tears?"

"Quite sure, sir."

"And their lodging in Exeter——"

So Aylmer had pressed a coin into her palm, had run across the Vicar's glebe, and, vaulted the gate that opened on the highway just as the London coach swung round the corner. And throughout the journey across Devon, until now when he stood in the window of the Exeter tavern and waited for his supper, he had been wondering why Dorothy Tresize had been in tears when she left home. True, she had left without a word; but there had been some compulsion in the matter, he felt sure; at least, she would have contrived to send a hurried message to him if she had been free.

Aylmer drummed gently on the window-panes; and the more he thought of his trouble, the more bewildering it grew. He knew that old Parson Tresize had a warm liking for him—a liking shown by twenty of those little graceful tokens which mark an old man's regard for one young enough to be his son. The Parson must have seen, too, weeks since, how matters stood with Dorothy and himself; and yet his welcome had not cooled. What had been said or done within the last few days to change all this? The visit to Exeter—so hurried as to suggest a flight—Dorothy's silence—all helped to deepen that suspicion and unrest which attend on hot young lovers. He knew of no rival—he had made few enemies, or none, in the course of his healthy, open-handed life—and yet some influence had been at work against him.

He found some consolation in the thought that Dorothy was in Exeter. He had obeyed his father in taking the road to London, and by good fortune the first stage of his journey ended here. He would have to start betimes the next day, but an unreasoning hope came to him that, even in so big a town, he might see Dorothy in the street, might touch her hand.

Aylmer felt very young and lonely on the sudden. To touch her hand! There seemed nothing else worth asking for; and he was off to London, not knowing when he would be permitted to return; and an intolerable heartache seized him, a deeper longing for the woods and bridle-ways of Mortcombe.

He would sup hastily, he told himself, then go boldly to Parson Tresize's lodging, ask him what he had done amiss——

He turned at the sound of footsteps, thinking it was the serving-maid who brought his supper in; but seeing three strangers enter and seat themselves at the far end of the room, he turned to the window again and fell to thinking of this new plan of his. There was no breach of faith towards his father, for he had said frankly that he would see Dorothy before setting off for London. He had not found her at the vicarage—well, he would see her here in Exeter instead. He gave a sudden start. Had he been thinking so intently of the Vicar's daughter that he had spoken her name aloud—aloud for any casual listener to hear? Clearly and without question he had heard the words "little Dorothy Tresize."

He glanced across the room. The three strangers were laughing together, while one of them—a dandyish man of forty or so—poured wine from a newly-opened bottle into their glasses.

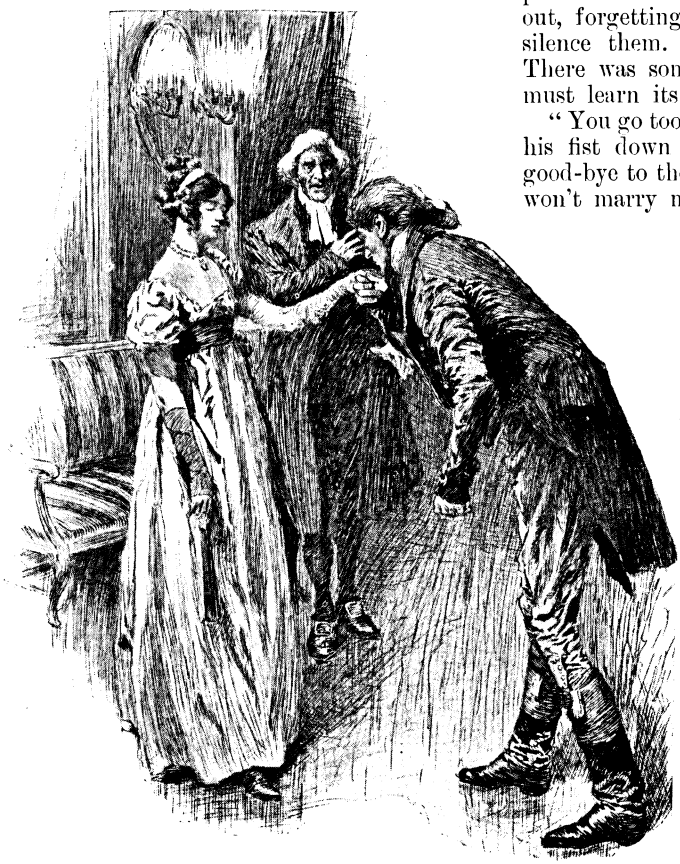
"Here's to little Dorothy Tresize!" repeated the dandyish man. "There's not another woman in England could have turned me from my bachelor's good estate."

Aylmer shrank further back against the casement, though the twilight had left the window recess in a darkness deepened by contrast with the candle-lights within. His first instinct, on hearing this raffish-looking gentleman about the town toast Dorothy Tresize, was to cross to him and strike him on the mouth; but he restrained himself.

There was something here that needed explanation, and only by patience could he learn the meaning of it.

"You're in earnest, Rigby?" asked one of his companions. "You've not asked us to share in this mad escapade just to play off a jest on us?"

"In earnest? Never more so. I tell you I'm wild for that little girl of the Parson's, and have been since I met her at the Hunt Ball here six months ago. She'll have nothing to say to me——"



"Parson Tresize saw him stoop and kiss her hand."

"Oh, listen to Dandy Rigby!" scoffed the second of his friends. "Rigby the heart-breaker, Rigby the resistless, sits in a tavern and confesses openly that he's been flaunted by a chit of a parson's girl!"

"There's no jest about all this," snapped Rigby, an ugly flush coming to his face. "I tell you she's making a changed man of me——"

"Oh, spare us! Sweet and twenty, in a muslin gown, standing by the hollyhocks in the old rectory garden. Heart alive, you'd tire of that sort of milk-and-roses innocence before the honeymoon was out!"

To Aylmer, watching from the shadows, the scene was almost insupportable. If he had doubted his love for Dorothy—as, indeed, he had not for one moment—he would have learned now the true way of his heart. As he listened to these ragabouts, heard the girl's name on their lips as they passed the wine across, he was eager to run out, forgetting they were three to one, and silence them. Again he checked himself. There was some ugly plot on foot, and he must learn its details.

"You go too far," went on Rigby, bringing his fist down on the table. "I'm saying good-bye to the old life to-night. Since she won't marry me willingly, I shall take the ready way and carry her by force to the first parson who will marry us. I'll make it up afterwards; there are no better husbands, they say, than men who have known their world."

His two friends caught each other's glance, and were tickled suddenly by this spectacle of Rigby turned into the devout lover; and they laughed till the tears coursed down their faces. Rigby got to his feet with an oath, seemed about to fling out of the room, then thought better of it, for he needed the help of these two later on.

"Give us leisure to grow used to the idea," said one of his companions, still holding his sides. "You need not look so black, Rigby. We'll do our share to help you into a runaway marriage."

"Then will you listen? I have it all planned out—if you will cease playing the mountebank. Miss Tresize goes to-night to Sir John Rufford's ball at Savanage. I tried to secure the honour of an invitation from Sir John, but the old man does not care for my company of late."

"That's odd," put in one of the others with lazy irony. "He's known to be strait-laced, and wary when he extends hospitality to a man. But your record, Rigby—surely that would satisfy him—

such a gentle creature, with a past all spent among the hollyhocks and lambs."

Aylmer was giving close attention now. The talk of these men was nauseous enough, but his need was urgent to learn Rigby's plan. A counter-plot was taking shape already in his mind.

"Oh, let bygones rest!" growled Rigby. "The road from Savanage to Exeter is lonely, especially where it crosses Thieves' Heath. What easier than to borrow a wrinkle from the gentry of the road, and hold up the Vicar's post-chaise on the Heath?"

"Oh, the plan's sound enough. What puzzles me is that you need two of us to help you. Surely you're a match for an old parson and the driver of the chaise? I'll do much for friendship, Rigby; but I'm giving up a supper-party after the play to go on this daft business of yours, and midnight heaths are well enough for poets, but for my part I find 'em deuced chilly. Give me the town, say I."

"You're a couple of prime fools. There will be other chaises, and men on horseback, coming home from Sir John's across the heath. It may happen that the Parson will travel in company, and you two must keep the others busy until I'm clear away with Miss Tresize. I shall bring a led horse with me."

"Oh, there's a spice of adventure in it, after all? You can trust us, then, Rigby, though I'd rather be the one to have charge of the eloping lady, while you——"

"Another time! I'll do the like service one day when you've need of me."

"At what hour do we start, then?"

Rigby glanced at the solemn-faced old clock that ticked stolidly in the corner. "In an hour at furthest. There's the seven miles from here to Thieves' Heath, and chance delays, perhaps, on the road—we'll hope before our time, rather than after."

"Then let's have another bottle in."

"Just one, if you must. But no more. We'll keep level heads, if you please, till we've caged our pretty song-bird."

Aylmer Combe, watching from the shadows, was possessed by a consuming impatience now. He held the threads of their plot; he had mapped out his counter-plot. His one need was to slip unobserved from the room and hire a horse, and set out with an hour's start of them. Rigby, however, sat directly facing his hiding-place, his bold eyes roving up and down the room, and the minutes passed slowly by, till Aylmer wondered if he had best make a dash for it. There was danger in the plan. If they were quick enough to intercept him, they would be three to one, and a blow on the head might put him out of action until all chance of rescuing Dorothy had passed. He looked at Rigby's raffish, handsome face; he pictured Dorothy in the arms of this man as he dragged her from the chaise and lifted her to the saddle of the led horse he meant to take to Thieves' Heath with him. He must be patient, Aylmer told himself grimly; for Dorothy Tresize's sake, he must make no blunder now.

And then the maid brought in the second bottle, and Rigby engaged himself with the filling of the glasses. It was Aylmer's chance, and he accepted it. The backs of the two were turned to him. Rigby's eyes were fixed on the glass he was filling. Noiselessly Aylmer crept down the shadowed side of the room, gained the door; a faulty board on the threshold creaked under him, and Rigby glanced up sharply, but too late to see the tall figure moving already down the passage.

"What noise was that?" he growled.

"Oh, there! If you're so troubled by an indoors sound, how will you fare on the open heath? Good Rigby, what a spectacle a man in love is! His nerves like fiddle-strings stretched tight, his face like a thunder-cloud when you so much as speak to him, his wine allowance only two bottles for three thirsty, full-grown men. Here's to your better health, my friend!"

Aylmer had reached the stables by this time. He had a good eye for a horse, and picked out the fastest of those which were for hire; for Savanage, he knew, lay eight miles beyond Thieves' Heath, and it was urgent he should reach Sir John Rufford's before the Vicar's post-chaise started on its journey.

The night was fine though chilly, the going dry and easy, and he was crossing Thieves' Heath well before Rigby and his intimates had left Exeter. When he reached Savanage he turned without hesitation up the long drive leading to Rufford House, for he had stayed there often, both in boyhood's days and since. The hall-door stood open as he reached it, and the sound of fiddles, the lilt of the dancers' feet, sounded plainly from within. He did not stand on ceremony, but hitched his nag to the bridle-ring at the door and strode forward into the hall. The first person he met was Sir John himself, with the Vicar's daughter on his arm; and his coming was so sudden, so unexpected, that

the welcome in Dorothy's face was worth a longer ride to see.

"I come as an uninvited guest, Sir John, I fear."

"But always a welcome one, Aylmer lad. Bless me, how ruddy and full of fresh air you look! Come and find Lady Rufford—she always had a soft spot in her heart for you, young scapegrace."

"But my intrusion, sir—surely that needs explanation; and my clothes——"

"Are dandyish — positively dandyish," laughed the other. "You must join us and explain afterwards, as you are so bent on it. I was just leading Dorothy out to dance Sir Roger de Coverley. Come, I'll find a partner for you!"

Aylmer reflected that his business could, in fact, wait indefinitely now that he had reached Rufford before the Vicar left for home. It gave him a curious satisfaction, too, to know that Rigby would be shivering all the while on Thieves' Heath. So he found a partner, and he danced Sir Roger as if the wind had got into his feet; and Dorothy's eyes and his kept meeting as they passed each other. Another glance was resting on Aylmer—the Vicar's. Parson Tresize had taken his share in the night's revelry with boyish zest, until he saw Aylmer, tall and buoyant, come down the ballroom. And since that he had been puzzled.

The dance ended by-and-by; and though, by all precedent, it should have closed the ball, young Aylmer pleaded for another measure. And when that was done, someone else suggested that the night was young; and, an hour later, Aylmer, with Dorothy on his arm, saw the Vicar making toward them with a grim, determined face.

"Dorothy, we've fifteen miles to drive," said Parson Tresize, "and to-morrow is Saturday; and on Sunday I've a sermon, not yet written, to preach in Exeter. As for you, Aylmer, I thought you safe at Mortcombe; but then, you never were safe anywhere."

Aylmer laughed suddenly—a boy's laugh, heedless and infectious. "Your pardon, sir," he said. "I had forgotten."

"Yes, yes. You were always by way of forgetting. You're light, Aylmer, light; I told your father, before you were breeked, that you were a fine lad to look at, but needed ballast."

"Do you know Thieves' Heath, sir?" asked Aylmer gravely.

"Do I know my own face, my boy? Of course I know it. We've to drive that way to-night—and, by that token, I have two pistols in the pocket of my greatcoat."

"You will need them, sir." Again Aylmer could not restrain his laughter. "The night is fine and dry, but the wind's bitter cold on Thieves' Heath. It was better to be dancing here than sitting a shivering horse and waiting for a chaise that did not come."

Dorothy glanced up in trepidation. It was not like him to talk so wildly, to laugh out of season. There was so much to be explained, and he was brimming over with some jest that also needed explanation.

Parson Tresize gripped him by the arm. "Have you been at the wine bottle, Aylmer?" he asked sharply.

"No, sir—for my sins. I missed my pint of claret when I failed to sup in Exeter. Since then—I've drunk only, sir, to——"

He did not finish, but glanced at Dorothy. She knew that he was thinking of that desirable and cleanly song, "Drink to me only with thine eyes," a song they had learned by heart, and glance, and furtive touch of fingers, beside the yellow-keyed old spinet at the vicarage.

"The deuce take you—with all deference to my cloth—will you tell me whether you are mad, or I, Aylmer?" sputtered Parson Tresize.

"Neither of us, sir. Indeed, we are both sane. I only ask the privilege of driving home to Exeter with you. Dorothy had best sleep here, I think."

They were standing in the empty ballroom. From the hall came chatter and the confused sounds of leave-taking.

"Aylmer," said the Parson quietly, "you come of a wild breed; so do I, for that matter. But is it—it's scarcely decent, lad, to air one's lunacy in Sir John's ballroom."

The lad was buoyant, dominant. He had danced with the slim girl on his arm, had learned that all the world was right with them. And nothing else, somehow, seemed any way to matter.

"Perhaps Dorothy will bid us good night, sir. It is all so simple—if I could have a minute's talk with you alone."

Dorothy drew away from them and made him a mock curtsey. And "I'm not needed here—I say good night, Aylmer."

And it was then that a surprising thing happened. Aylmer stooped to her; and Parson Tresize, bewildered already by the night's doings, saw him stoop and kiss her hand, as if by right—here in the candle-lighted ballroom, against all dictates of decorum.

"Good night, my dear," said Aylmer. "The Vicar and I have a long drive before us."

"There—there is no danger?" she asked, with a pretty air of solicitude.

"Why, no, except to the tempers of three gentry who are catching their deaths from cold on the top of Thieves' Heath."

The Parson, soon as Dorothy had gone, took the younger man by the arm. "What is all this?" he demanded.

Aylmer told him what he had overheard in the tavern at Exeter, and Parson Tresize's face grew grave as he listened. "Rigby, did you say? Was that the rogue's name? I know him well—so did Sir John—so did your father—that was long ago, before our houses were forbidden him." He stood drumming his fingers on the lid of his snuff-box, as if thinking backward along the years. "It's an odd chance, Aylmer, the oddest I have ever known. You can do more, lad, than you thought—you can wipe off an old score of your father's."

"But how, sir?" asked Aylmer, puzzled in his turn.

"He never spoke of Rigby to you? Well, no, he wouldn't. It happened when we were all a good deal younger; you were just a lad, and there was no need to vex you with the trouble. No need to vex you now, for that matter. It was not what Rigby did, but what he tried to do. I was glad at the time that your father could not meet him face to face, try as he would; he would have killed him, Aylmer."

The other stood very erect on the sudden. "I am proud to take up any quarrel of my father's. Let's take the road, sir, lest they grow tired of waiting for us."

"There, there!" muttered the Parson, with a grim smile. "You've got the killing look in your eyes. It must be something short of murder, lad. I'll not have you swing for so poor a thing as Rigby."

While Parson Tresize was finding Sir John to explain how matters stood and to ask hospitality for Dorothy for the night, Aylmer wandered round the hall until he found what he was searching for. Some delicacy of scruple restrained him from prying too deep into the story touched on so lightly by the Parson; it was enough that he had two scores to settle with Rigby now—his own and his father's.

They were the last to leave Sir John's door. Those whose way ran into theirs had not waited, thinking they had left already; and they had the long, moonlit road to themselves. The wind was blowing a half-gale now, and it was bitter cold.

"It pleases me to think of Thieves' Heath," said Aylmer, breaking a long silence. "It will be colder still up there, and they've had long to wait."

"Aylmer," said the Parson, following his own train of thought, "I want to ask you if you know that—that there is a coolness between your father and myself."

"I know of none, sir. Surely you're the best of comrades."

"We were until a few days since. He hurt my pride, Aylmer. He does not stop to pick his words when his mood is gusty. Perhaps he did not know how deep he wounded me."

"Was it—about Dorothy? Was that the reason of your coming to Exeter? I—I see it all now." He laid his hand impulsively on the other's arm. I am grieved, sir. My father spoke in haste. He would be the first to admit it."

"Yes, if I would let him. But my pride is stiff as his, lad, when once you touch it to the quick. I trust this quarrel will not last our lifetime, it is hard at my age to let old friendships go; but I tell you, Aylmer, I'm feeling hard and bitter."

They were glad when at last their chaise reached the turn of the road where it began its winding, uphill climb to Thieves' Heath. There would be action by-and-by to clear away this mood of trouble and misunderstanding that had settled on them.

"Three of them, you said?" asked the Parson, with a sudden chuckle.

"Yes—and, by that token, sir, you spoke of two pistols that you carried. Lend me one, for I've only my sword."

"Oh, you can borrow it, and welcome. Three of them, waiting for an old parson and a timid maid—with pistols ready primed—by gad, sir, as you laymen ragabouts would say, they're out on a gallant enterprise!"

Their chaise went slowly up the hill. The wind was whipping the firs as if it laid a lash about their round, high shoulders; it was moaning, crying, shrieking among the riven branches.

"Mr. Rigby chose a pleasant night for courtship," said Aylmer, cool, debonair, because his loathing of the man was so complete.

They left the last belt of firs behind, and the driver whipped his horses up as they reached the level, trackless heath. And then there came a call of "Stand and deliver!" a rocketing of the chaise as it obeyed the

summons. For some reason a superstition held all chaise-drivers of those days that highwaymen of any grade were stronger than themselves.

The moon was riding high between the scattered, rifted clouds. As the chaise door was roughly opened, the Parson thrust out a meek and frightened face—bending forward,

"Oh, anything but that, sir! She's my only child——"

"Well, then, there's nothing to whimper about. Will you marry us to-morrow—here on the open heath—I ask nothing better?"

"I—I do not know you, sir—it is all so irregular——"



"The three gentry of the road held their arms up."

so that he hid Aylmer from the three men who were standing on the roadway.

"What is it, sirs?" he asked. "If it is money—poor parsons have not much—but you are welcome to my little store."

"Oh, gad, sir, I do not ask your money," said Rigby jauntily. "There's a maid beside you in the chaise—the daintiest maid in Devon—and I need her."

"Not half so irregular, Parson, as the ride over hill and dale I'd pictured, until we found one of your cloth to marry us. Come, it's vastly simple, and my friends here will be witnesses."

The Parson knew that Aylmer had slipped out quietly by the other door. He saw the three men standing so secure of their prey that they had not troubled to take the pistols

from their belts. And on the sudden he stepped out into the roadway and levelled his own pistol. And Aylmer, from the rear, rapped out a sharp command. And the three gentry of the road held their arms up and stood there between two fires, and looked strangely foolish. It was disconcerting, after waiting, chilled to the marrow, for a chaise that did not come, to find that it held, after all, not a decrepit parson and a pretty Devon maid, but two gentlemen of honour who knew how to use their pistols.

"Mr. Rigby," said Aylmer, with a touch of the pleasant West Country drawl, "I've a long account to settle with you. My father —Sir Aylmer Combe—asked me to collect these small outstanding debts."

Parson Tresize looked on. He liked this boy's handling of the matter. He said so little and he meant so much; he was of the breed, the Parson decided, that makes good soldiers and good husbands, and Dorothy might go further and fare worse.

"Can you hold these two, sir, while I attend to Mr. Rigby?" went on Aylmer, with the same easy mastery of the situation.

"I think so, Aylmer, by the draggle-tailed look of them! Oh, I think so, lad."

So then Aylmer put the second pistol into Parson Tresize's left hand, and took from under his arm the riding-whip that he had been searching for in the hall at Savanage while the Parson was seeing to Dorothy's comfort for the night. And what followed was not good to see. Rigby, to make the matter worse, took his punishment so badly that Aylmer felt as if he were thrashing a misguided cur, ill-bred and ill brought up, for sins it could not help.

He was glad when all was over, here on the moonlit heath where the gale was driving the heather close along the ground as if it swept it with a flail. And, by-and-by, they found themselves, the Parson and he, jogging forward on the road to Exeter; and, in the intimacy that comes to kindred folk at these times, they hatched a stratagem. When they reached Exeter, and had roused the servants at the Parson's lodging, a messenger was sent on horseback to Sir John's at Savanage.

"Best let Dorothy know we're safe," said Parson Tresize drily. "She'll trust me to travel safe, Aylmer, but by the look of her when you said good-night, she'll not sleep till she knows whether you are dead, or only near to it."

They slept well that night, as men do who have found weather and hard service. And the next day they took the westward coach, and in the evening, near to dusk, they came to Sir Aylmer's house of Mortcombe and entered unannounced, and found Aylmer's father sitting disconsolate in the room they called the library, because it was so full of guns and rods and sporting prints. And the old man looked up, with heedless glee, at the sight of Aylmer.

"You'll never make a soldier, Aylmer," he snapped. "I always told you so. I bade you go to London—and you're here, with a parson who should know better. Discipline —I thought I'd thrashed it into you—and you'll never learn it—and—and I'm very glad to see you, boy."

Then Aylmer told him what had chanced at Exeter and on Thieves' Heath. And he spoke of Dorothy, so that Sir Aylmer remembered his own hot-headed wooing time, and the queer way of it. And the father, undismayed by his inconstancy, paced up and down between the guns and sporting prints, and turned finally and held one hand out to Aylmer, the other to the Parson.

"You thrashed Rigby — and you love Dorothy in that clean, wholesome way—mark you, Aylmer, I never go back on my word —not if you bribe me with half England —but—but I think the world goes very well."

And then he glanced at the Parson, and conquered some wayward gust of pride.

"Tresize," he said, "I ask your pardon."

And the Parson felt his trouble slip from him, as if he had taken a bath somewhere where the upland streams delve pleasant pools among the rocks.

"You scarcely needed it," he answered, and tapped his snuff-box lightly and handed it to Aylmer's father.

THE CHANGING MOODS OF MUSIC.

BY G. R. FANSHAWE.

WHEN the late Edward Grieg wrote his well-known "Peer Gynt" Suite some years ago, and the score was given out to orchestra for rehearsal, there was a general belief that some serious errors had been made by the copyist. The key transitions were so startling, the unresolved discords so numerous that, although the whole effect was of admitted beauty in every movement, it was hard for musicians to believe that one of their distinguished *confrères* could add such extreme modulations and startling chords to his early transgressions in the matter of consecutive fifths.

To-day, by the side of the ultra-modern men who are making their presence felt in concert-room and opera-house all over Europe and America, poor Grieg is quite *démodé*. Where he chastised us with whips, his successors chastise us with scorpions. When the man whose musical taste was formed in the middle or late Victorian era hears an ultra-modern concert or opera, he comes away declaring that Théophile Gautier was quite right when he declared that music is the most disagreeable of all sounds. Of course, he is as wrong as Gautier was. Music to-day is more complicated, subtle, and delicate than it was even in the days of the great Bach and Beethoven, but it has less spontaneous beauty, and is far more difficult to understand. To no small extent, the old world of melody is a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed.



Photo by] [*Elliott & Fry.*

RICHARD STRAUSS.

The ears of great composers have been developed to an extent that the layman cannot hope to understand. I was in a well-known opera-house when Richard Strauss was directing the rehearsal of an orchestra of over one hundred musicians. The music was his own, and after a *tutti* — a brief passage that engaged every instrument—he held up his *bâton* and calmly told one of his instrumentalists in the brass section that he had played an F natural instead of an F sharp. The player said it was true, and that he would be more careful. From the bewildering noise Strauss could pick out the contribution of a single instrument, and tell the player that he was half a tone flat! When a musician has ears of this quality, what is the poor amateur to do? Must he not have faith in those who are giving their life to the advancement of the new expression, and rest content to accept for a time much that he cannot understand? Must he not feel that the "Beyond Man" has arisen, or is about to arise, above the ever-receding horizon of music?

Perhaps the secret of the changing moods of opera-house and concert-hall lies in a movement that is slowly uniting the domains of the painter, the author, and the composer. This movement originated in Paris, and belongs of right to the days when Edouard Manet, the great artist, whose "Olympia" was recently taken from the Luxembourg to the Louvre, was beginning, amid the violent execrations of the mob, to widen the boundaries of art. He, Cézanne, and Camille Pissarro did not merely influence the great painters of the realist, impressionist, and symbolist schools who followed them, but the return to Nature caught some of the most susceptible minds in France.

It was in the Café Guerbois—whose doors are still open to the *flaneurs* of the Boulevard de Clichy—where the apostles of

the movement met, that Cabaner remarked: "*Pour rendre le silence en musique il me faudrait trois orchestres militaires.*" Men of letters like Gérard de Nerval and Stephen Mallarmé shared the enthusiasms of the artists, symbolism followed impressionism, and then, after a time and a struggle, the movement reached the musicians. It was the season when Meyerbeer was still a power and Verdi was a prophet, while purely French music was following Gounod and Massenet, Camille Saint-Saëns and Ambroise Thomas, into a land overflowing with honey — or saccharin — or treacle. The men just mentioned were all masters of the academical form, though Saint-Saëns thought he was an innovator and a Wagnerian. They had a gift of melody that attracted every ear; their sweetness could not cloy, and their scores were models of correct contrapuntal writing.



Photo by] JOSEF HOLBROOKE. [*Russell & Sons.*

Paris treated the new movement in music with mild ridicule and complete indifference. Frenchamateurs had already howled down Wagner; he was voted a master of mere noise. Sentimental and sensuous music, with the rhetorical outpourings of Meyerbeer and the charming artificiality of the late eighteenth century, held the ear. In London—you may say in England — our academicians were writing long dull work of the kind that, buried once, no man dug up again. For the rest, all worthy music came from the old classics.

But while the ruling traditions gave no sign of breaking, they were being gradually undermined; and when the twentieth century dawned, the Continent, after considerable hesitation and diffidence, had quite accepted a new musical idiom, had recognised the extension of the musician's domain, had granted him the liberty of its patronage to express new emotions, to enter the territory of other arts by the aid of the "programme music" that illustrates a story, the "tone poem" that is nearly related to the painter's work, and the music-drama (not to be confused with melodrama), of which Charpentier's "Louise" is the most remarkable example.

Richard Strauss, noisiest and most vigorous of iconoclasts, had gained acceptance for tone poems like "Also sprach Zarathustra," "Tod und Verklärung," and "Don Quixote," and, encouraged by the knowledge that he was understood by a few and tolerated by many, he proceeded to write "Salomé," the opera in which the East, with all its passion and colour, is presented faithfully in terms of music for the first time in musical history. This musicdefies all rules of form and violates all the traditions of the academies, but let us remember that it accompanies scenes and intensifies actions that took place more than a thousand years before we adopted our Western scale. You have but to compare the score of "Salomé" with the score of Dr. Saint-Saëns's "Samson et Dalila" to see the real significance of the change, the impassable barrier that separates the old formalists from the new men, who have abandoned form for expression just as Black Alberich, in "Das Rheingold," barters love for power. Here, then, we had from Germany a remarkable contribution to the emancipation of music. But France had not been idle,

and Claude Debussy, working on entirely different lines, had brought to its logical outcome one side of the teaching of the Café Guerbois.

He had devoted himself to the expression of certain moods of man and Nature; he was striving to express attitudes of mind, sympathies, and emotions so fragile and delicate that to analyse is to destroy them. The passage of a cloud across the face of the sun, the shadow cast over a June meadow, the soliloquy of a faun in the high woods during the hours of fire, the pilgrimage of the moon through the fields of heaven, the ebb and flow of the sea on a rocky shore, the song of the wind to the trees—all these things, vague, impalpable, imaginative, stirred his brain and inspired his pen. He sought to recover some pagan peace or moods, and, the better to express himself in terms of music, turned away from our modern scale to one of whole tones. It is in this idiom that the most of his message is delivered. Just as Strauss was attracted by the subject of "Salomé," and set all its savagery to music, so Claude Debussy was fascinated by Maurice Maeterlinck's exquisite dream-play "Pelléas et Mélisande," a creation so strange and rare that, seeing it, we seem to watch some world that, in all its expressions of life, lies infinitely remote from ours. To Maeterlinck's creation Debussy gave something akin to the gift of a second voice. His music does not attempt to emphasise anything; it is no more than a delightfully subdued comment. On the concert platform such music is frankly impossible; it suffers from association with the robust and virile work of the young Italian composers, and with the vigour of Richard Strauss. It is intended to be staged by itself, without a yesternight of Verdi and a to-morrow of Puccini to stir recollections or anticipations; and hitherto this treatment has not been forthcoming in London, so that the supporters of the old *régime* are first very puzzled and then very angry when "Pelléas et Mélisande" is put before them. They are like hungry people who want a porterhouse steak with vegetables, and a bottle of Burgundy, and are supplied with a little basket of choice fruit and a vase filled with clear pure water.

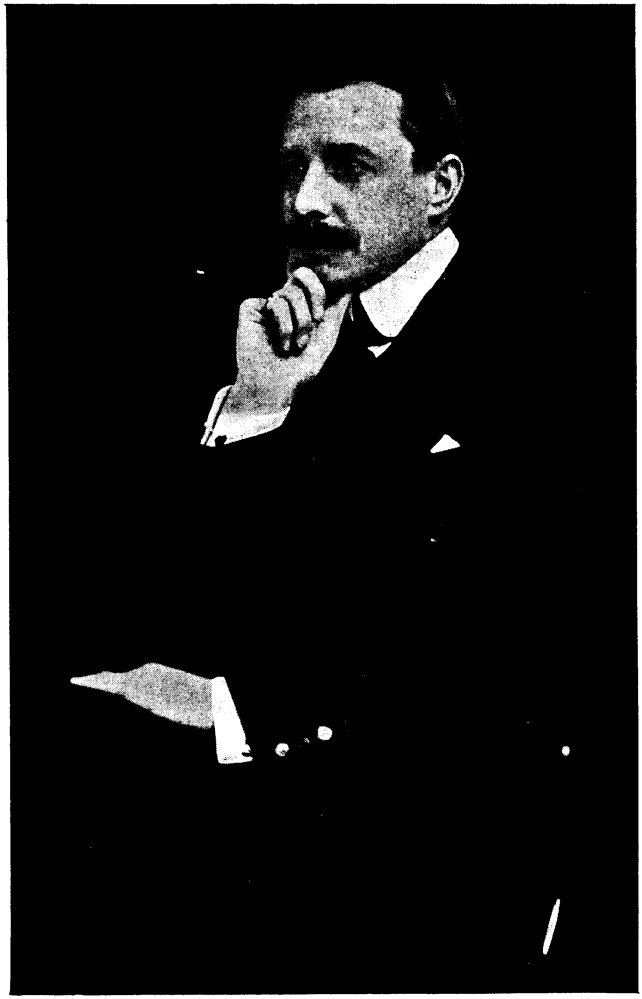


Photo by] [*Langfier, London.*

BARON D'ERLANGER.

I find that there has been a quicker response in this country to the fierce challenge of Richard Strauss than to the delicate invitation of Claude Debussy, or to the call, hardly less attractive, of Vincent d'Indy, the brilliant composer, conductor, and director of the Schola Cantorum in Paris. This is perhaps because we are more

nearly allied to the Teuton than the Latin. The Frenchmen just named have exercised a great influence upon song-writing in France. Plain straightforward melodies, modulating from the tonic to the dominant and back again, are as dead as Hugh Capet. A definite attempt is made now to make the melody express the true emotion of the words, to unite poet and composer. The poems of Alfred de Musset, Baudelaire, De Banville, Mallarmé, and others have been given pride of place; the old cheap lyrics are no longer in demand among the leading composers. A similar force, working on different lines, has affected German songs. The work of Hugo Wolf, Brahms, and others of our own time is associated with poetry, not with mere verse. But the whole movement in France is the outcome of the force that began to work when Manet's "Olympia" drove conventional Paris to distraction, and in the following years when impressionism and symbolism were born.



Photo by [*H. Manuel, Paris.*

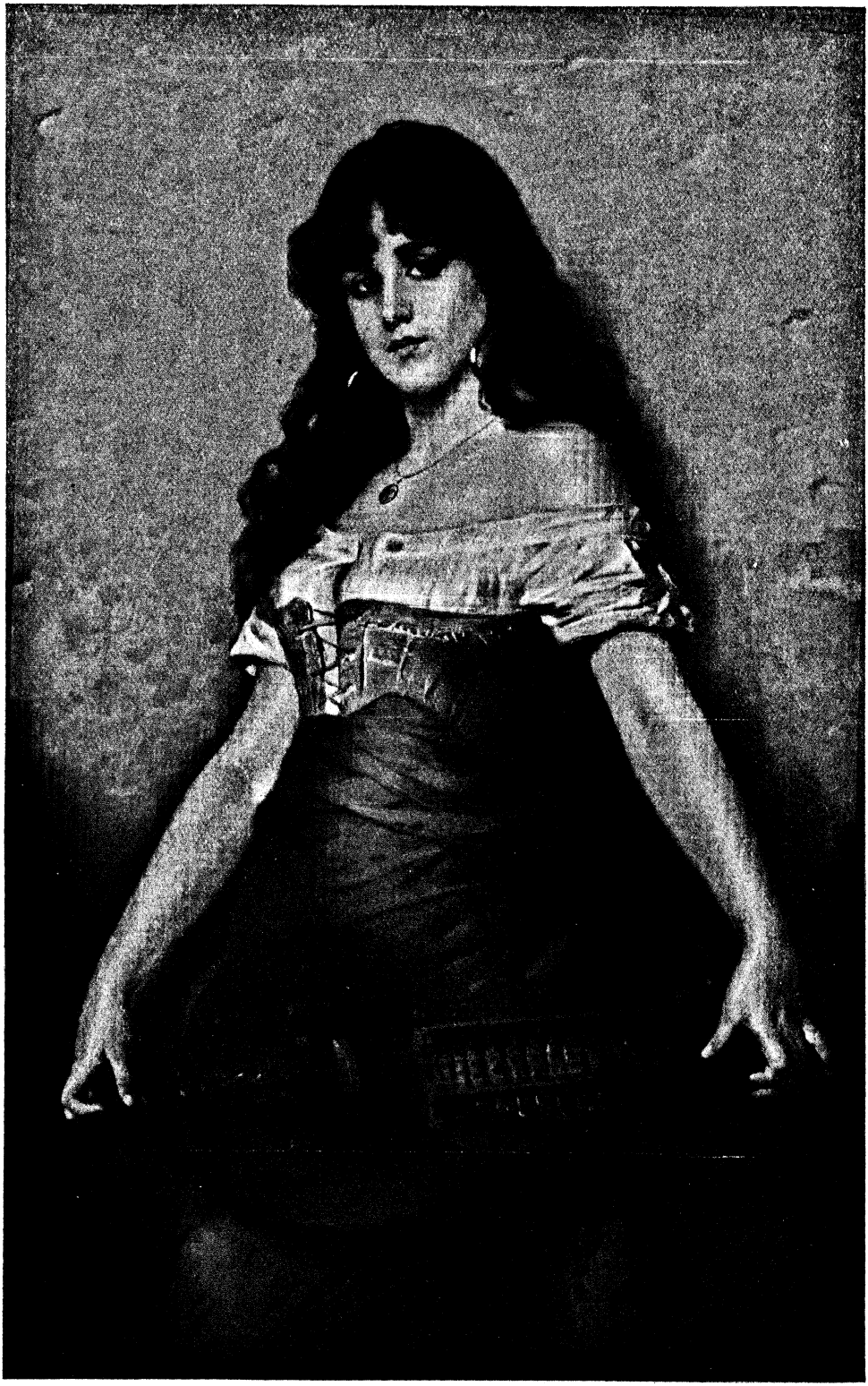
XAVIER LEROUX.

When we ask ourselves what contribution this country has made to the changing moods of music, the answer is a little difficult, because it is so unflattering. Only two words are required, and they are—"very little." I have endeavoured to show that both modern France and modern Germany have been speaking with their own voice. They have developed certain forms from those they found in possession of the field of music, and, having decided upon his new idiom, each composer has "with his own hand laboured it to grow." The enterprise of the great majority of our own musicians, unfortunately, has followed different lines. The academic composers have been faithful to their traditions; many of the younger men have "played the sedulous ape," if I may borrow Stevenson's phrase, to men whose genius is not British. There is little in this country yet to testify to a new art form as far as composition is concerned, but there is much to suggest that our young composers have welcomed foreign methods and adopted them in manner that has been more flattering than fortunate. It has been painful to listen to many a very ambitious production of the past three or four years, given only after months of labour and wire-pulling—work full of a certain quality of cleverness, whether original or derivative, but in nearly every case lacking genuine inspiration, and quite free from a suspicion of attractive melodic outline. It is here that many young English composers have failed. They have been too indifferent to the claims of melody, too keen on mere technical skill, too content to follow the mood of the hour, the fashion of the moment. In short, they have not striven to evolve any art form that shall express in its own language the considerable British genius of composition; and the new music that fills our concert-hall programmes, and at times reaches the opera-house, is seldom or never by a British composer, and, when it is, generally takes the form of a first—and last—performance. Even Eugene d'Albert, whose opera



"THE CAROL." BY LADY ALMA-TADEMA.

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"THOUGHTS FAR AWAY." BY N. SICHEL.

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"Tiefland" was produced at Covent Garden in October, is only British by birth. He was educated in Germany, and sometimes uses the old full-toned scale that Debussy has made popular, or should one say possible?

Against the comparative failure of British composers to express the changing mood effectively and without extravagance, we must put the fact that the musical revival is only now reaching our shores.

In response to the spirit of this revival, many of our composers are turning to exploit a field that has been neglected for many years—the field of folk-song and music. It is here that we must look for the old-time expression of national musical genius; in songs racy of many different soils it has striven for centuries. Somersetshire orchards, Yorkshire and Cumberland moors, East Anglian marshes and dykes, have inspired little works of art so fresh and spontaneous that the musician feels they should never be allowed to die. Their origin is lost, but their fragrance is of far-off generations, and has parted with nothing of the original beauty.



Photo by] [*H. Manuel, Paris.*

VINCENT D'INDY.

Curiously enough, in the years when rural England was neglected and unknown by composers, these songs were in no danger. At harvest supper, at Christmastide, in fair-time, on all the rare occasions of great mirth and jollity, the familiar and well-loved tunes rang out; the lofty barn, the oak-raftered kitchen, the ale-house parlour, with its sanded floor and ingle-nook fireplace, woke their welcome echoes again and again. West country did not know east, nor the north recognise the south. English folk-song is as regional as the *zarzuélas* of Spain. Men repeated the songs their grandsires sang, and taught them to their children. They were proud of their heritage; no change could be an improvement.

In the early years of our own generation, musicians began to take notice of the existence of this treasury of national music. Folk-song societies were established, men and women began to collect the old airs. They were only just in time. Railway development, the rural exodus, the return of urban workers to their homes for summer holidays — all these forces were tending to substitute for the genuine songs of the land the latest flashy melodies of the music-hall, so alien in thought and spirit to the countryside. The old men were dying out; their children took but a lessening interest in songs of rural scene and incident; their imagination was being stirred by the report of the flamboyant life of great cities.

Happily, this change had not gone too far before the searchers after old melody had started to quarter their ground. The journals of the leading society had recorded many delightful numbers, full of genuine untutored inspiration; success was stimulating many workers; the field, once so wide, was beginning to narrow. To-day several composers have turned their own and friends' discoveries to good account. Messrs. Vaughan Williams, Frederick Delius, and some few others of less note have treated

folk-song as a medium for inspiration as happily as Dvorak did in his symphony "From the New World."

It may be that when the task of collection was undertaken first, many of those who took part in it regarded their work in the light of antiquarian labour, but they must have discovered their mistake by now. They have given to musicians what had been for too long neglected or ignored. To attend one or two of Mr. Sharpe's lectures on folk-song, and then to hear, for example, Mr. Vaughan Williams's "Norfolk Rhapsody," is to gather a very definite impression of the direction from which the British musical renaissance seems most likely to proceed.

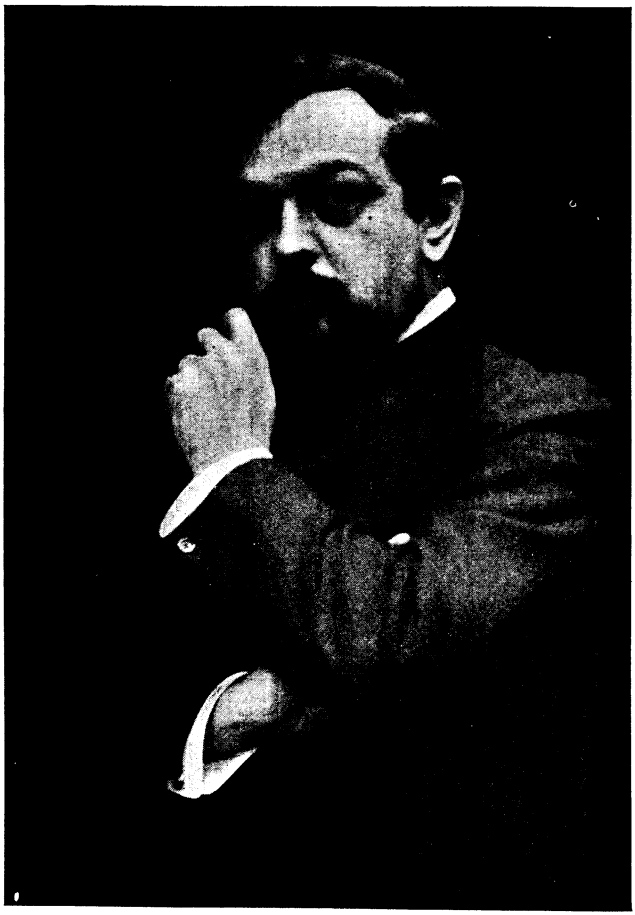


Photo by] *[Otto, Paris.*

CLAUDE DEBUSSY.

Many a young musician is beginning to find genuine inspiration in those old songs of the countryside that the countryside has rejected. If it should be along these lines that the expected development travels, we shall find ample recompense for the long wait, the period of uncertainty, the vain and ineffective striving to speak in strange and unfamiliar idioms, which, whatever their appeal to the musician, by reason of their cleverness must needs remain *caviare* to the multitude, because they lack melody and spontaneity. Only a few years ago the fact that a composition had an island origin was more against it than half a dozen ordinary demerits; to-day there is an eager and expectant audience for the recovered national wealth. The musician is in the same plight as the actor—he lives to please, and must please to live. Very few could afford to be true to themselves of old time; now their best chance lies in their power to utter the cry of their own country, to give the old simple utterance the benefit of their academic skill, as a diamond worker gives the rough uncut stone its proper brilliancy. The stimulus that the extended and elaborate treatment of folk-song will bring to general musical progress in the different districts from which attractive material has been garnered, needs no insistence here. Already the signs of a healthy rivalry may be noted. The enthusiasts of one county vie with those of another, and a new "find" creates widespread interest and not a little harmless envy. In short, looking round for signs of a revival corresponding to that which the Continent has witnessed in the last decade, the writer can find nothing quite so hopeful, nothing quite so significant as this.

Musicians of British birth who agree with this point of view will see before them the most hopeful prospects—a large measure of encouragement and reward. We may look, then, in the near future, for a definite and valuable contribution from these islands to the general movement that has been outlined here.

THE HERO AND THE BURGLAR.

By BARRY PAIN.

ON the ninth day of the honeymoon, being at the time in the presence of his wife, Mr. Herbert Fayle broke a boot-lace. And that settled it. From that time forward, onward, and upward, through twenty years of happy married life, Mrs. Fayle entertained an immutable opinion of her husband's potential ferocity in direct contradiction to the facts. Her sister, who once ventured to suggest that Herbert was not so very terrible, was treated with superiority.

"You would naturally think so, Clara. That quiet manner of Herbert's is very deceptive. You see, you have never seen Herbert when he is roused. I have. I remember one occasion, quite early in our married life, when the storm broke." This was the occasion when the boot-lace also broke. "I assure you I shall never, never forget it."



"Brought the tray of whisky and glassware to the ground."

Mrs. Fayle used Herbert's potential ferocity to overawe her erring servants. This she did with singular persistence, perfect confidence, and no success whatever. "If," she would say to a careless housemaid, "Mr. Fayle had seen the way the drawing-room was dusted—or, rather, *not* dusted—this morning, I tremble to think what might have happened." The servants did not tremble. They knew better. Mrs. Fayle was away once for a month, and her husband was left in the house. During that month the servants had the time of their lives. Mr. Fayle was vaguely conscious that he could never get any hot water, and that there were many horrid irregularities; but the only time—it was when dinner was an hour late—he had ventured to inquire why, he was told that the dog had got out. This satisfied Mr. Fayle thoroughly, and made him ashamed that he had spoken. The dog got out quite a good deal while Mrs. Fayle was away, and so did the servants; and if one of them—not the dog—missed the last train back, then why, as the cook observed, did those railway companies want to go altering their time-tables about?

The fact is that, in an international competition, Herbert Fayle would have been awarded first prize and champion gold cup for sheer meekness. But his wife's belief in her husband's brutally heroic qualities remained unshaken. The high opinion that so many women have of their husbands frequently has no basis in facts, but it is always touching, and sometimes useful.

Herbert Fayle lived a peaceful life in a quiescent suburb, and the heroic quality that is never required is never missed. But let us do Mr. Fayle justice. He did protest, with all the strength that congenital meekness

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would allow, against any excessive estimate of his militant character. "I'm a good-tempered man," he said. And he was. It was only after the incident in which Joshua Bidder was concerned that he gave up the struggle.

Joshua Bidder was a burglar, and a disgrace to his profession. He knew nothing, he could do nothing, he was intemperate, and he had nerves. He was unskilful and unfortunate; he had frequently been in prison, and he never had anything to show for it. He was despised by his own fraternity. "The only time Bidder ever got anything," said one able and scientific crook, "was once when he broke into a place where they had the mumps." If a job of peculiar softness was to be described, it was said that Josh Bidder hisself couldn't hardly miss it. Police-court missionaries had done their best with Bidder, and so had the Salvation Army, but nobody was more eager to get Joshua to stop it than the old-established burglars were. It was not merely that he brought the profession into contempt; his bungling often gave warning and spoiled a chance. "Look 'ere, Josh Bidder," said an elderly expert, at the present moment eligible for entertainment at the State's expense, "if ever I catches you tryin' anythink as I've a mind to touch myself, I'll just put your lights out! You turn your attention to sneakin' milk-cans on a foggy mornin'—that's all you're fit for!"

Failure and ignominy having driven him from the metropolis, Mr. Bidder went to the suburbs. Here he hung about and peeped over walls, and attracted the notice and suspicion of the local police. His face alone was almost enough to justify arrest. Dogs would go two miles out of their way to bite Bidder, and do it cheerfully. The most credulous of maid-servants at the back door refused to believe his preposterous statement that he was a travelling photographer, and unchained the dachshund.

When Joshua Bidder decided that on the night of August 2 he would enter and ransack the residence of Herbert Fayle, it might have seemed to the careless observer that he had at last struck the line of least resistance. But a judicious burglar would have discovered that the Fayles were leaving for their holiday on the following day, and that on the afternoon of August 2 their plate and jewels had been safely deposited in the strong room of the local bank. And the judicious burglar does not crack empty nuts.

On the evening of August 2, Joshua was in a position of affluence which was unusual with him, having that morning succeeded in changing a bad half-crown. This being so, Joshua entered a public-house and took a light dinner, consisting of a quart of stout with sixpennyworth of gin in it. He felt that this gave him heart for the work before him. It cannot be necessary to add that the judicious burglar does not drink when he is on business, and does not provide evidence by entering public-houses. Briefly, he does very few of the things that Joshua did.

At eleven o'clock he entered the garden of the Fayles' residence. Standing with his flat feet on a Jacoby geranium, he surveyed the house, and came to the conclusion that everybody was in bed and asleep. If he had walked round to the other side of the house, he would have seen that one room on the first floor was still lit up; but Joshua was not a glutton for physical exertion, and he did not walk round. He pushed back the catch of the scullery window, removed his boots, opened the window, and entered. He should not have left his boots in the garden, but the table-knife procedure was quite correct. He struck a silent match, and by the light of it made his way to the dining-room. That fatal dining-room! Many a burglar far abler than Joshua has found in the dining-room the graveyard of his reputation.

Joshua now switched on the light. He noted with pleasure decanters, a syphon, and glasses. "Anybody would think they were expectin' of me," he said to himself, as he poured out half a tumbler of whisky, and took a comfortable chair. He intended to take just that one drink, and to come back for the rest after he had made his collection. But in five minutes he was fast asleep.

In his study upstairs, Mr. Herbert Fayle had heard nothing of Joshua's entrance. Fayle was a tidy man, and he was arranging and putting away his papers preparatory to his departure on the morrow. This being done, he felt thirsty, and decided to go down to the dining-room for a whisky-and-soda. Reprehensible conduct of this kind was very unusual with Mr. Fayle.

He noticed the light under the dining-room door, and made a mental memorandum to ask Mary to speak to the servants about their carelessness. Then he opened the door, and his heart sank within him. The sleeping Joshua was a horrifying and repulsive blackguard. Herbert Fayle decided that his right course would be to close the dining-room

door as softly as possible, so as not to wake the burglar, and then to fetch one or more policemen. But at that moment Joshua suddenly awoke, realised Herbert Fayle, and staggered to his feet.

Joshua was not, speaking pedantically, sober. But he pulled himself together as well as he could, and embarked hurriedly on a story which he believed to be plausible.

"Sorry, guv'nor," said Joshua. "My mistake entirely. I've been dinin' with a few genelmen friends—lil' gel's birthday—and lorst me way 'ome. What I expect is I put the wrong latch-key in my pocket, and the trine took me past my right station, and——"

Joshua stopped short. He had suddenly grasped an important fact—that the other man was much more frightened than he was. In two lurches he put himself between Mr. Fayle and the door, and changed his manner.

"Hand over your ticker and your cash, or I'll cut your liver out!" said Joshua fiercely, producing his table-knife.

Mr. Fayle retreated, with one hand grasping his watch-pocket, and with fourpence and a bunch of keys jingling alluringly in his trousers' pocket, took up a strong position behind the dining-room table, and said: "Now, steady now. Steady now. Steady now. Really now. Steady now."

Joshua brandished his knife and overbalanced himself. He clutched at things in general, and brought the tray of whisky and glassware to the ground, with himself on the top of it. His uninviting face was cut considerably, and the noise was such that it woke the sleeping Pomeranian in its basket on the second-floor landing.



"Mrs. Fayle clung to her husband, and the dog clung, by its teeth, to Joshua."

"Yap—yap—yap—yap—yap!" said the Pom. Its varied excursions had been useful to the servants, and now it was rendering splendid service to Mr. Fayle himself. The dog is the friend of man.

Joshua Bidder, picking himself up from the ruins, heard the dog and recognised the force of its argument. He had been bitten before, and now, in the presence of any dog,

his backbone turned to water. He had just time for a little parting sarcasm as he made for the window.

"So long, ole pal!" said Joshua. "Sorry I cawn't stop. Remember me to the missus."

He flung up the window and stepped out on to the drive. As he did so, a large black thing jumped out of darkness and collared Joshua by the neck and the left wrist. And the bass voice of the large black policeman said: "'Ere, where do you think you're comin' to?"

"Fair cop," said Joshua humbly.

Inside the dining-room Mr. Herbert Fayle heard the comforting voice of the policeman, and saw in a flash that pursuit was now deprived of any attendant disadvantages. So he went in pursuit at once, and the way he came through that window with a poker clasped in one hand was perfectly glorious.

"It's all right, sir," the policeman called, as he clicked the handcuffs on Joshua's wrists. "It's all right; I've got him here." He flashed his bull's-eye over Joshua's lacerated visage. "My word, sir, but you've given him what for, and no mistake!"

"Bit of a rough and tumble," said Mr. Fayle complacently.

"Lucky for him I got him before you come up with that poker. You'd have done for him, sir."

"I've bin cruelly mis'andled," whined Joshua. "If there ain't one law for the rich and another for the paw, 'e should be made to awnswer for——"

"Hold your jaw!" said the policeman unfeelingly.

And then Mrs. Fayle and the dog arrived on the scene, the former in a dressing-gown, and both agitated. Mrs. Fayle clung to her husband, and the dog clung, by its teeth, to Joshua. The dog being removed, explanations followed.

Mrs. Fayle's account of the incident was based partly on the policeman's account—Mr. Fayle gave him a sovereign afterwards, and I think the man had earned it—and partly on Joshua's account, and partly on feminine intuition. With a view to a possible mitigation of his sentence, Joshua continued to maintain that he had been grievously assaulted. Mrs. Fayle could get very little out of her husband, and he shirked questions, but that was quite easy to understand; these brave men are often so modest and reticent about what they have done.

"Fortunately," said Mrs. Fayle to her sister Clara, "the Dobsons' gardener saw the man as he entered, thought he seemed a very suspicious character, and just mentioned it to the next policeman he met. The policeman found the man's boots under the open scullery window, and lay in wait for him. And if he had not been there, Herbert would have killed that man—killed him!"

"Would he really?" said Clara.

"The policeman and the burglar both thought so, and they knew. Herbert makes light of it, but then that is his way. I must tell you, he entered the dining-room without a suspicion there was anything wrong, and there was that awful man crouching with a knife in his hand ready to spring on him. Herbert was unarmed, and, as you know, he is not a big man, not nearly as big as the burglar was. Without an instant's hesitation he picked up a heavy decanter and felled the man to the ground with it. Then there was a most awful struggle between them. At last the burglar managed to break away and got through the window. Herbert snatched up a poker and dashed after him. As I say, it is a mercy the policeman was there. The people who have never seen Herbert when he is roused simply do not know him."

Herbert protests mildly that his wife exaggerates. But he would sooner wear the halo of the hero than give the exact version of what happened between him and Mr. Bidder.

A PROBLEM.

AT Christmas-time, if you are good,
And never quarrel with your food,
Or tear your clothes, or break your toys,
Or climb, or slide, or make a noise,
Or disobey—so people say—
Old Santa Claus, all trig and trim,
Will fill your stocking to the brim,
Because you're good on Christmas Day.

But this is what I can't make out—
The boy next door, who runs about,
And tears his clothes as bold as bold,
And *won't* eat porridge when it's cold,
And won't come in when days are fine—
Old Santa Claus can't tell a bit,
And fills *his* stocking, all of it,
On Christmas Day, the same as mine!

AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON.

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

A CHRISTMAS DINNER À LA MODE.

It was the family Christmas dinner. People had come from all over to attend.

The host, a genial, hearty-looking soul, flourished the huge carving-knife over the glistening turkey.

"Cousin Jane," he asked, "what part of the turkey do you prefer?"

Cousin Jane smiled a superior smile.

"None, thank you. I am a vegetarian. Haven't eaten a bit of meat for a whole year, and look at me."

"Um!" said the host, passing on to Uncle John. "Uncle John, what part?"

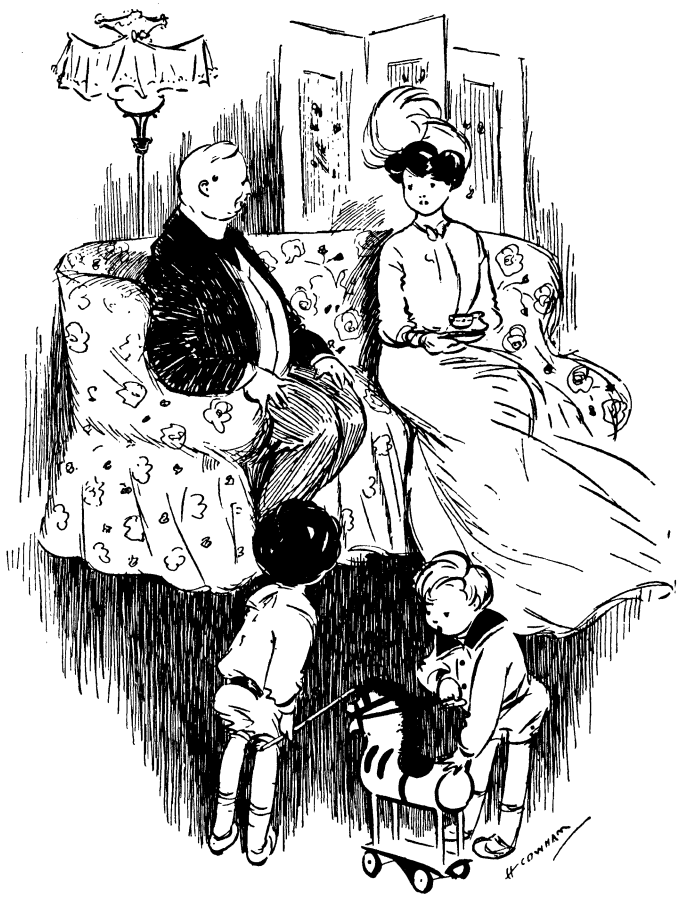
"I'm on the buttermilk diet," replied Uncle John. "Greatest thing you ever saw. No impurities in the system. Don't bother about me. I don't even have to drink buttermilk any more! I just swallow every other day a tablet containing two billion lactic acid bacteria, and make it myself inside."

The host passed on to the next.

"Well, Cousin Adelaide," he said, "what can I help you to?"

Cousin Adelaide moved away slightly and scornfully from Uncle John.

"If you please, one ounce of turkey. I'm a Fletcherite. Half an ounce would be my usual portion, but this is Christmas, and I'm going to be really reckless. Oh, if you only knew how it makes me feel!"



PLAYING THE GAME.

SHE: Do your children know you when you rig yourself up as Santa Claus?
HE: Oh, yes, but they are very nice about it. They pretend they don't.

The host turned to brother Sam.

"Well, Sam, what can I do for you?"

"No proteid to-day, thank you. I eat nothing but vegetables that grow underground—roots, if you have a few of them, they will be all I want, or possibly a little bran. You see, the primitive man lived on roots. Our chief trouble to-day is that we do not get back to a state of Nature."

"Pass him the celery," said the host. "I guess that is the best we can do. Bertha, what can I do for you?"

Cousin Bertha, a wan little thing, smiled brightly.

"Nothing, thank you; I'm living on hot water. But I had my glass at eleven, and another one is not due till three."

The host turned disconsolately to a thin, nervous, pale-looking man on his right.

"Well, Cousin Pete, what can I do for you?"

"Give me everything in sight—turkey, light and dark meat, turnips, celery, potatoes, chicken pie, cranberry sauce, sweet pickles, mince pie, plum pudding, cake, ice-cream, coffee, bananas, nuts, and raisins. Just put me down for the whole menu from beginning to the end."

The host smiled once more—a cheerful Christmas smile.

"What is the matter with you?" he asked.

Cousin Pete twisted uneasily.

"I've got nervous dyspepsia," he replied, "and the only thing that relieves me is to fill



THE EXPLANATION.

INDIGNANT CUSTOMER: Here, waiter, there's a dead fly in the soup!

WAITER (sympathetically): Ah, they can't stand the heat, sir. It's boiling 'em that kills 'em, poor things!

myself up as full as possible with everything there is."

"And does it agree with you?"

"You bet it does! I'm getting better every minute."

"How did you get it in the first place?"

Cousin Pete looked around at the others.

"First," he said, "I was a lactic acid fiend, then I became a Fletcherite, then a rootite, and then a hot-water crank. Now I'm a glutton, and I jolly well hope I shall never be anything else!"

T. L. M.

PEGGY'S PUDDING.

Peggy made a Christmas pudding,
And, like every young beginner,
With her skill was so delighted
That she thereupon invited
Uncle, aunt, and Dick to dinner.

Each she gave a hearty helping,
Then perceived, with much remorse,
Irrepressible grimaces
On her guests' expressive faces,
As they took more brandy sauce.

Aunt forked out a flabby object,
Looking puzzled and annoyed;
Peg's apologies were nimble.
"*That*," she said, "must be the thimble";
It was made of *celluloid!*"

"Jove, we're poisoned!" muttered uncle;
Aunt endorsed his darkest fears.
Peg perceived her failure clearly,
Bit her trembling lip, and nearly
Had to leave the room in tears.

"Why," cried Dick, "it's *only* camphor!
Camphor's really rather nice—
Helps to keep us in condition.
So, Miss Peg, with your permission,
May I have another slice?"

How his hostess beamed upon him!
How her heart began to glow!
When he, later, popped the question
('Twixt the pangs of indigestion),
Peggy didn't answer "No."

A GENTLEMAN called at the address where a donkey was advertised for sale. The door was opened by a small boy, and the caller said: "I have come to inquire about the donkey for sale." The small boy went to the foot of the stairs and called out: "Father, you're wanted!"



A NECESSARY PRECAUTION.

"YOUR Albert is going bald, ain't he, Mrs. Smithers?"

"Yes, Mrs. Peters, 'e certainly is getting 'igh 'eaded, and it makes it very awkward for the poor dear. When 'e washes, 'e 'as to keep 'is 'at on 'is 'ead to tell where 'is face finishes!"



"LOVE LAUGHS AT LOCKS AND BARS." BY WILLIAM STRUTT.

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"THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL." BY VAL HAVERS.

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"GNOMO"
DOMES OF SILENCE
(Trade Mark)



DOMES *of* SILENCE
or Patent Invisible Castors.

Domes of Silence are little discs of very highly polished steel, so shaped that furniture fitted with them will glide silently, smoothly and easily over any floor or floor-covering, consequently they

Save Your Carpets.

Domes of Silence prevent chairs and tables when pushed back from tearing the carpet, and from scraping, scratching or otherwise injuring oilcloth. They also enable heavy furniture, such as side-boards, cabinets, wardrobes, &c., *to be pushed about with ease* instead of moved with difficulty, consequently you shoul l

Fit them Throughout your Home.

When once Domes of Silence are fitted *they never require further attention*, they cannot get out of order as they are made of hardened steel, in fact they are everlasting.

From all Cutlers, Ironmongers, Drapers, or Stores, 6d. for four.

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DOMES *of* SILENCE

are fitted to light furniture, such as chairs, tables, etc., by a gentle tap of the hammer, and to heavy furniture by simply placing one underneath each corner—they fix themselves.

Domes of Silence are made in five sizes ; but there is one price only at which they are sold—6d. per set of four.

Beware of Monstrosities

It is to be regretted that we have to warn you against some poor and ineffective imitations of the Domes of Silence.

In your own interest ask for Domes of Silence, and see that the interior of each "Dome" bears the words The Invisible Castor, and our patent number.

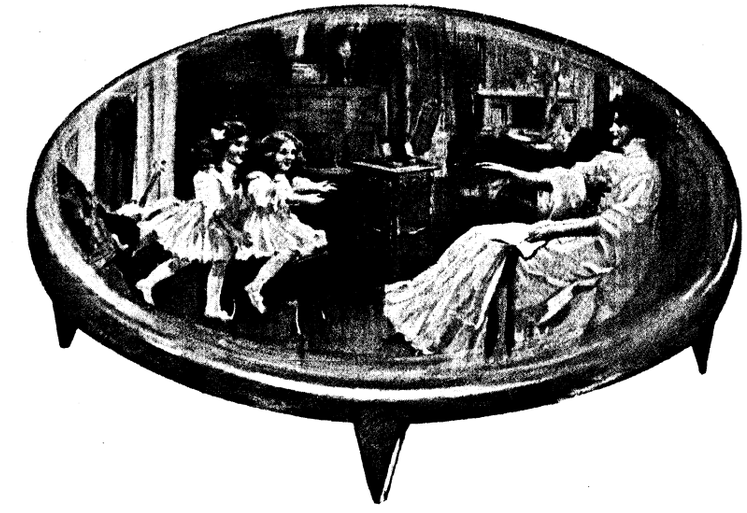
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IMITATIONS ARE DANGEROUS.



THE INVISIBLE CASTOR

"GNOMO"
DOMES OF SILENCE
(Trade Mark)



" Steel domes that glide when the fairies ride
In the myriad mansions of men."
P M.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

Many things in current demand will shortly bear the words :—

"Domes of Silence"

(our Registered Trade Mark)

Our name thereon is an absolute guarantee of quality, and will appear only on the best articles of their kind on the market.

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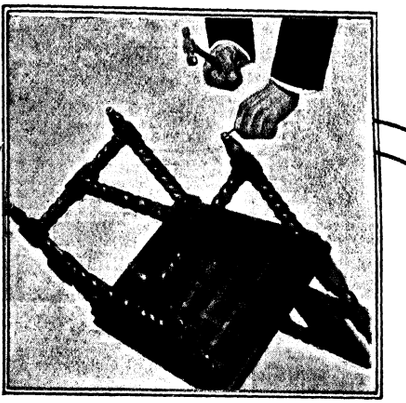
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"Domes of Silence"

FELT STUDS.

"Gnomo"

The "Domes of Silence" Felt Studs have been specially designed for use on

Parquet, Tiled or Marble Floors.

They prevent furniture marking or injuring the floors. They save strain on the furniture, and, like the "Domes," render all tables and chairs silent and easily moved.

In Private Houses, Libraries, Lecture and Concert Halls, Churches and Schools where the flooring is of wood, tiles, marble or parquetry, they mean

SILENCE

and will be found to be a real comfort and economy.

The "Domes of Silence" Felt Studs are easily affixed by means of a key—a few gentle taps with a hammer and they are on.

The "Domes of Silence" Felt Studs are made in two sizes—medium and small, and are sold at 7½d. for 4, including the fixing key.

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From all Cutlers, Ironmongers, Drapers, Stores, etc.



AN advertisement for feeding-bottles in a country paper ran thus: "When the baby has done, it must be unscrewed and put in a cool place under a tap. If the baby does not thrive, it must be boiled."

A YOUNG Irish priest who was a staunch adherent of total abstinence thought he had at length made a convert of one of the most intemperate of his flock. He was, alas, mistaken, for one day, as he passed the public-house, there was Pat emerging therefrom.

"Oh, Pat, coming out of the public-house again!" was the cry that broke from the sorrowing priest.

"Sure, yer honour, you would not have me stay there altogether!"

NURSE: You have got a little brother.

SMALL BOY: Oh, yes, I know! The milkman brought him; it says on the cart: "Families supplied daily."

A LADY on the kerb signalled for a hansom, and two cabbies came so eagerly that they collided. Thereupon one Jehu expostulated: "What do you mean by coming blundering up like that? The blooming woman called me first, didn't yer, laidy?"

CUSTOMER: Waiter, this fish isn't as good as I had here last week.

WAITER: Well, sir, some folks is never satisfied—it's off the same piece.



A LONG-FELT WANT.

ROBINSON (reflecting): Umbrellas recovered! What a good idea! They ought to do a roaring business. I'm almost certain it was Smith who took my umbrella. I must put these people on his track.



OBVIOUSLY.

"WELL, maybe I do drink too much sometimes, mum, but I drinks to drown my sorrows!"

"What nonsense, Williams! *Your* sorrows must have learnt to swim long ago!"

CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER CASES.

Not for the throne of kings,
Or thrill that glory brings,
The heart-sick lover cries;
But for one sign of grace
Lighting his lady's face
He heaves his heavy sighs.

Not for the joys of June,
Or raptures 'neath the moon,
The aching void aspires;
But on a loaf of bread
Of wheat (or rye instead),
Are centred its desires.

Not for the glorious light,
Or moonbeam in the night,
The busy burglar prays;
But cloud and wind at call
Are better for his haul,
And his unhallowed ways.

The swift Atlantic swell
Is for the sailor well,
And well the tossing waves;
But for a gentler breeze,
Some limit to the seas,
The poor land-lubber craves.

There's beauty in a song,
Melodious and strong,
Heard from the guinea seat;
But when your neighbour bawls
All day through jerry walls,
'Tis not so very sweet.

How grand the rushing rain
Upon the thirsty plain
And the hot crumbling ways!
But not so grand to see
The rain fall ceaselessly,
Upon your holidays.

A song like this is good
If you are in the mood,
If not, 'tis maddening;
In fact, 'tis time and place
Gives any thing its grace,
And grace to any thing.

Edgar Vine Hall.

EDITOR: One minute, Jones.

REPORTER: Yes, sir?

EDITOR: I don't know whether it is absent-mindedness on your part, or an expression of your views on matrimony, but I'd rather, when you have occasion to write about a wedding, that you should not say that Miss Smith and Mr. Brown "underwent" a marriage ceremony.



A SUITABLE MOMENT.

"YES, my memory is getting very bad. By this time to-morrow I shall have forgotten everything I have done to-day."

"H'm! Could you oblige me with the loan of a fiver, old chap?"



YOU WILL BE A.I.
IF YOU TAKE
BEECHAM'S PILLS.

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THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE EAT

BERMALINE BREAD

just because it is nice.—But what a lot of good they are doing themselves in a quiet way!

SOLD BY ALL HIGH-CLASS BAKERS.

"YOUNG man," said a rich and pompous old gentleman, "I was not always thus. I did not always ride in a motor-car of my own. When I first started in life, I had to walk."

"You were lucky," rejoined the young man. "When I first started, I had to crawl. It took me a long time to learn to walk."

KINDLY GENTLEMAN: Do you know, my friend, that half the cases of cancer are caused by people smoking those foul, dirty, short, black clay pipes?

SON OF TOIL: And do you know, guv'nor, that 'alf of the black eyes are caused by folks not mindin' their own business?

"I CALL to see Monsieur Rollard," announced the French visitor.

"You can't see him, sir; he's not up yet," replied the maidservant.

"Vat you tell?" indignantly demanded the caller. "I com' yesterday, and you say: 'Can't see heem because he is not down.' Now you say: 'Can't see heem because he not oop.' Vat you mean? Ven will he be in ze middle?"

MRS. JONES (reading): It says here that a nautical mile is 6,080 feet, and a statute mile is only 5,280 feet. Why is that? I thought a mile was a mile.

MR. JONES (without looking up from his paper): Well, a mile is a mile, but a statute mile is measured on dry land, while a nautical mile is measured on the water, and you know most things swell when in water.

MRS. JONES (resuming her reading): Why, of course! How stupid!



A VILLAGE WELCOME.

DISTRICT VISITOR: I have knocked repeatedly at Number Three, but can get no answer.

NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOUR: Wouldn't they let you in, miss? Too bad! At any rate, you don't do *us* any harm.

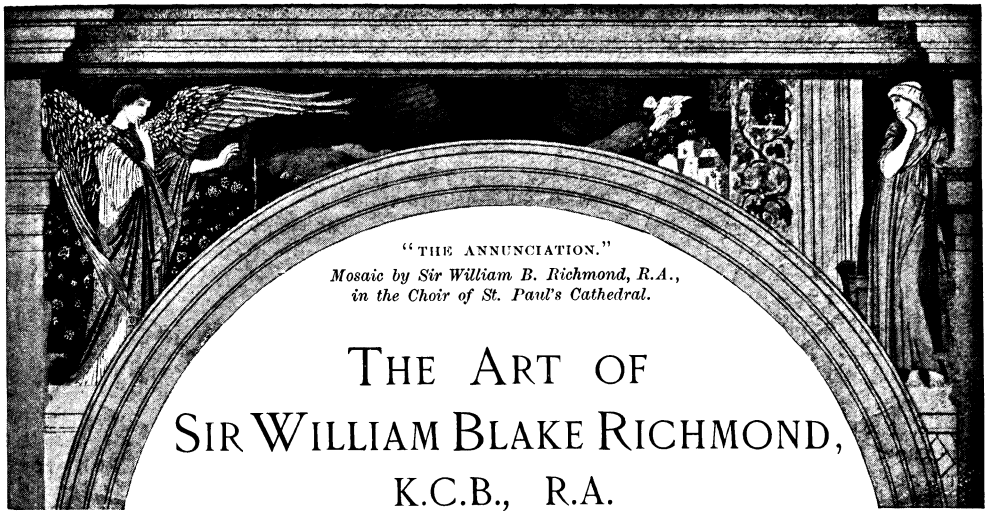
"CAN'T you live just as cheaply in the suburbs as in town?"

"Yes, but everybody knows it out there."



"VENUS AND ANCHISES." BY SIR WILLIAM BLAKE RICHMOND, K.C.B., R.A.

From the original in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, reproduced by permission of the Corporation of Liverpool.



"THE ANNUNCIATION."
Mosaic by Sir William B. Richmond, R.A., in the Choir of St. Paul's Cathedral.

THE ART OF SIR WILLIAM BLAKE RICHMOND, K.C.B., R.A.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

The pictures reproduced from photographs by Frederick Hollyer, Pembroke Square, W.

THE influence of beauty is like the good seed, which, before it can show its germinating properties, must fall upon the sensitive, prepared, artistic soil. Both soil and seed must do each their part, for "the individual genius of the artist" counts for at least as much—and this should never be forgotten—as does the influence to which he is subject.

William Blake Richmond had the good fortune to be born amongst artistic surroundings—his very name announces this—and although the man William Blake, poet, painter, and visionary, died fifteen years before the birth of the child who is his namesake, the memory of his enthralling personality was sufficiently alive to make Mr. George Richmond bestow upon his son names which must have precluded his following any career other than the artistic.

Far from robust in childhood, William Blake Richmond was educated at home; and we have but to look at the alphabet of honour which to-day follows his name to see how excellent that education was, and how easy it would have been for him, with his vigorous intellectuality, to have made the same mark he has done in art in one of the so-called learned professions, or to have discovered for himself in the sister profession of music an equally profitable field of labour.

He was, however, born in 1842, and consequently his first mental consciousness synchronises with the period that was in England a sort of modern Renaissance. It was a momentous era—a time of enormous enterprise and much achievement—and it was under the pressure of its enthusiasm that the malleable taste of youth was, in his case, turned to pictorial expression.

With his passion for the beautiful, his vivid instinct for the decorative, his exceptional art-educational advantages, and his inexhaustible industry, it is no wonder that he attracted public interest early, and we find him, at seventeen, the painter of an important picture called "Enid and Geraint," in which the pre-Raphaelite influence was apparent.

William Richmond, at fifteen, entered the Royal Academy School, where he gained two silver medals; and whilst he was working hard there from the antique and life under its teachers, he was, on his own account—for there was more speculation already developed in his nature than is the case with most boys in their teens—following his own methods at home and doing creditable work. And yet, even here, although his art must be said to be anchored in Nature, he was making use of that of others as the means of reaching it; for Ruskin, who took the liveliest interest in the boy's progress, lent him, from his wonderful collection at Denmark Hill, many a study to copy.

It has been said that the "Enid and Geraint" was painted under the influence of Ruskin, but it is more likely that the pre-Raphaelitism which for ten years had

been attracting the youngest and best talent of the day was in the air; and since John Millais, Holman Hunt, Rossetti, Bell Scott, and Samuel Palmer, who were constant frequenters of the house of his father, had already made a mark that was to be permanent on English art, the shadow of these men's personality would, it is natural to think, be the true influence under which young Richmond fell; and, again, if we are to look further for that influence, which Channing says "is to be measured, not by the extent of surface it covers, but by its kind," we must attribute some to his father, Mr. George Richmond, A. R. A., D.C.L., the well-known portrait painter, who, if he was never as famous as is his son, owed the accident which prevented his being so solely to his time's environment. Had it been possible to reverse their order, he might have risen to the same heights of achievement as the son.



ONE OF THE HERALD ANGELS IN THE SPANDRILS OF THE CHOIR OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

Mosaic by Sir William B. Richmond, R.A.

The inscription runs through the whole series of angels, and is from the Book of Isaiah.

Instruction, as we know, does much, but encouragement does more, and Mr. Richmond combined the two in his son's education. He saw to it that he was thoroughly grounded in classics and mathematics, that he received a complete musical training, and the encouragement he bestowed acted upon the budding talent of the youth as sunshine upon a flower.

"Enid and Geraint" was sold, and the young painter of seventeen, with the proceeds, spent six weeks, in company with a friend, in the galleries of Italy; and he returned with a sketch-book full of records of the genius of the early Italian Masters. He had the divine gift of appreciation, and he had painted enough to be an expert in the paintings of others; therefore his eyes were open to the special character revealed in the works of Giotto, Titian, Michael Angelo, Veronese, and those several other great painters of Italy.

Sir William Richmond, with the diffidence which is part of the inheritance of great mentality, would be the last person to range himself or allow himself to be ranged with Giotto; but he has that "supreme common sense" with which Ruskin endows that great man; and we can apply to him, without being held fulsome in flattery, the words our golden-tongued critic found applicable to this, one of the earliest of Italy's Masters: "Whatever other men dreamed of, he did. He could work in mosaic; he could work in marble; he could paint . . . and all thoroughly . . . Accordingly, he ranges himself at once among the disciples of the Apostle of Works, and spends most of his time in the same apostleship."

Italy laid its detaining grasp on the imagination of our young painter, and had an important effect upon his artistic development; and, upon his painting and selling a picture called "Ruth in the Field of Boaz," he again utilised the money to return to the country of his affections. Thus, at the age of twenty-three, in 1865, we find him



THE CUMÆAN SIBYL.

established in Rome ; but between those years which are marked by his "Enid and Geraint" (1859) and by "A Procession in Honour of Bacchus" (1869), the first large canvas to be issued from the Roman studio, there must be sandwiched that early series of portraits, among the most successful of which were those of the two sons of Sir Henry Acland and the daughters of Dr. Liddell, the Dean of Christ Church. Whilst we are speaking of this particular branch of art, portraiture, we—although they were not issued from his studio until many years later—must enumerate the admirable portraits of Holman Hunt, Professor Darwin, Robert Browning, Mr. Andrew Lang, the Bishop of Salisbury, Lord Cranborne, H.R.H. Princess Louise, H.M. Queen Alexandra when Princess of Wales, Prince Bismarck, Mr. Gladstone, Lady Clinton Dawkins, Mrs. Rawlings, Miss Dove, Mr. W. J. Cartwright, Robert Louis Stevenson, Miss Muriel Wilson, Mrs. Drummond, the Countess Grosvenor,

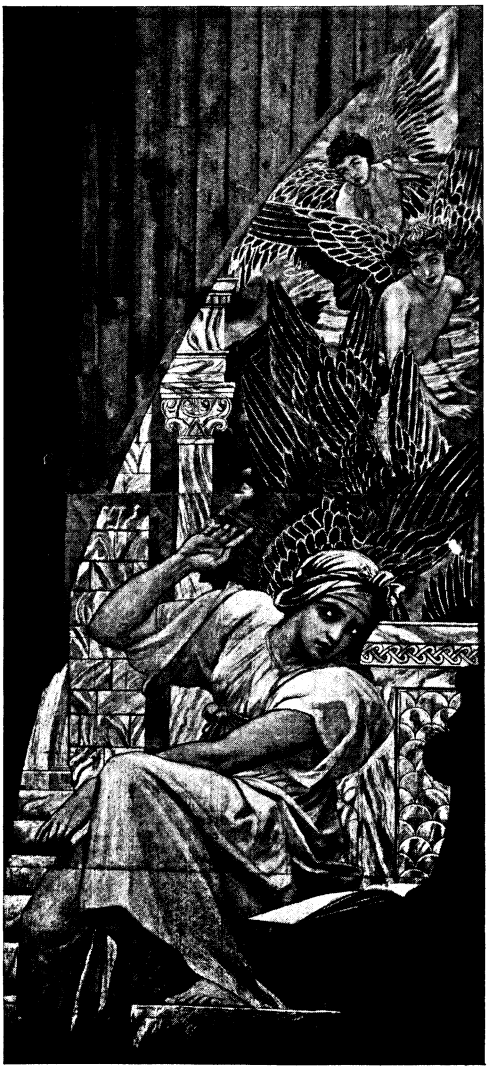


THE DELPHIC SIBYL.

Two mosaics by Sir William B. Richmond, R.A., in the Choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, above the Gallery.

Mrs. Fuller-Maitland, the Dean of St. Paul's, and Lord and Lady Pembroke.

The picture of "A Procession in Honour of Bacchus" took Mr. Richmond two years to complete, and it was while he was painting it—in the winter of 1866–67—that Mr. Gladstone, who happened then to be in Rome, formed that friendship with the young artist which became of so sincere and lasting a nature as to make it peculiarly suitable that he should have been chosen to be the sculptor of the monument which has been erected to the memory of Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone in Hawarden Church—an achievement which



THE ERYTHRÆAN SIBYL.

Mosaic by Sir William B. Richmond, R.A., in the Choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, above the Gallery.



HEAD OF THE SIBYL, AS FINISHED.

he himself considers to be his *magnum opus*.

That Mr. Gladstone should be interested in the work of the young man is to be understood on other grounds as well as those of art, for history in 1866 was repeating itself; and just as, many years before, the statesman and his future wife, Miss Glynne, when they were in the Holy City, had made friends with George Richmond, the father, so, in these after years, Mr. Gladstone's interest embraced the son.

The sojourn in Rome was memorable, however, for other friendships; and the same year which brought Mr. Richmond in contact with Mr. Gladstone made him known to Liszt, Gounod, and to that extraordinary man and painter, Giovanni Costa, whose influence was to be an abiding one upon the arts of Frederick Leighton and that of George Heming Mason. That the influence of Costa upon the art of the young Richmond was one of less perceptible permanency is, doubtless, owing to his being of a less malleable nature, of his having more formed tastes, and his opening up of powers in other directions, allowing of the discovery of larger and more varied fields of labour. In Miss Olivia Rossetti Agresti's book, "Giovanni Costa, his Life, Work, and Times," Sir William Richmond gives his first impressions on going to the studio of Costa, to

whom Leighton had introduced him; and, in reading them, one can understand how much the fresh distinctness of this Italian painter's art influenced for good all those who came in contact with it, how largely he helped them to see and understand Nature, in showing them how to look for the ideal that underlies reality, and in this way to turn the commonplace to romantic use. "I was," Sir William writes, "a stripling devoted to art, but naïve in my views, or, better stated, ignorant . . . On various easels were pictures which I shall never forget; they were and are quite unlike any others that I have seen. Big in design like Greek bas-reliefs; full of a strange atmosphere. They united a system of lines with an appreciation of planes—to my thinking, qualities only combined by the greatest masters. With that kindness ever his, Costa brought down, from various stages where he kept his studies from Nature, a

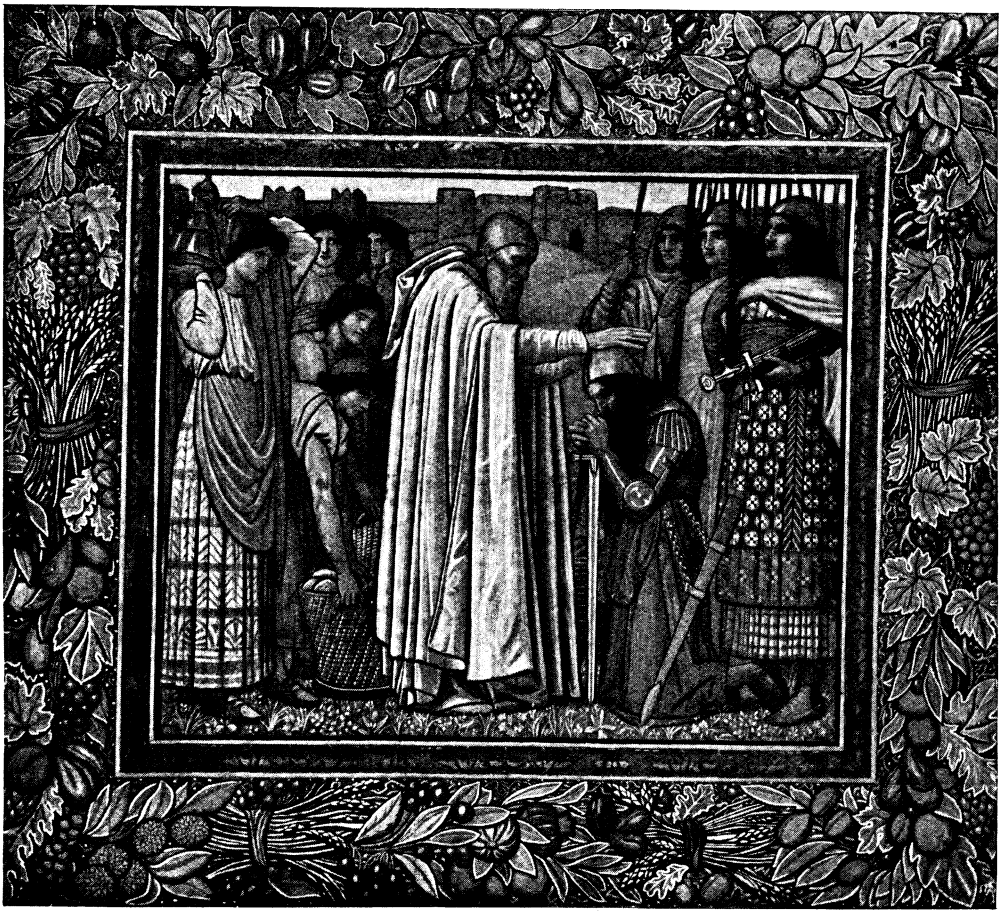


CHRIST IN MAJESTY.

Mosaic by Sir William B. Richmond, R.A., in the Apse of St. Paul's Cathedral, behind the Sanctuary.

multitude of beautiful works—swift impressions, designs for pictures, and also elaborate drawings which might have been from the hand of Benozzo Gozzoli. It was a new revelation of Nature to me—it was broad and simple, yet full of detail . . . Leighton had told me that I should see a real artist, and that I should find a true friend, and it was so. I went back to my studio another man; I had been refreshed by a new stream, and one, too, that flowed direct from Parnassus. Costa's inspiration was so real—not in the modern realistic sense, but in the ideal; it had something prehistoric, yet modern, large, and manly . . . Here was a man seeing Nature, not only with the eyes of a poet, but as a sculptor. And, not only that, for Costa was an artist whose sensibilities might have led him into various paths, but he, a Roman—better still, an Etruscan—was convinced of his own individuality, the hereditary strain of severity was in the very veins of his being . . . If what I have painted in landscape has any merit," diffidently Sir William ends the extract we have taken from Miss Agresti's book, "it is largely due to the early influence of Giovanni Costa."

We trace the classic feeling, which Sir William Richmond's early education had impressed upon him, in the subjects which he painted after his return from Italy in 1870, and in them we see an unconscious assertion of scholarship. We have "Ariadne Deserted by Theseus on the Island of Naxos," "Electra at the Tomb of Agamemnon," "Death and Sleep Carrying the Body of Sarpedon into Lycia," "Hercules

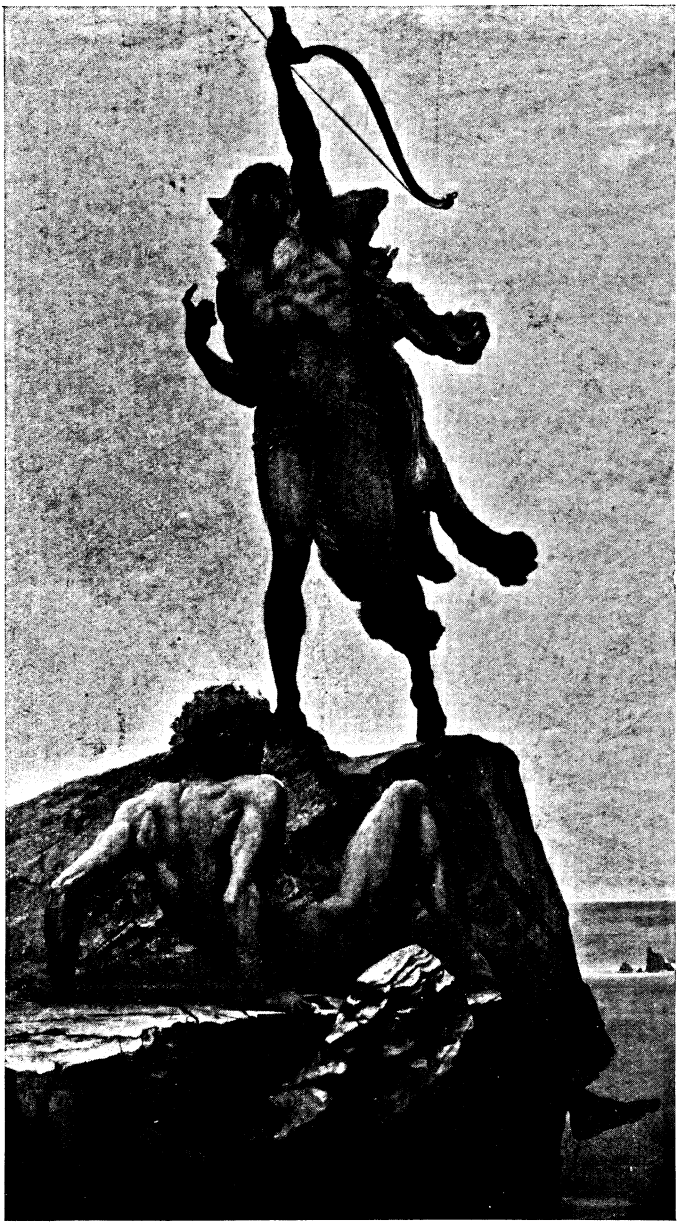


"ABRAM AND MELCHISEDEC." BY SIR WILLIAM B. RICHMOND, R.A.
Panel on the North Wall of the Sanctuary, St. Paul's Cathedral.



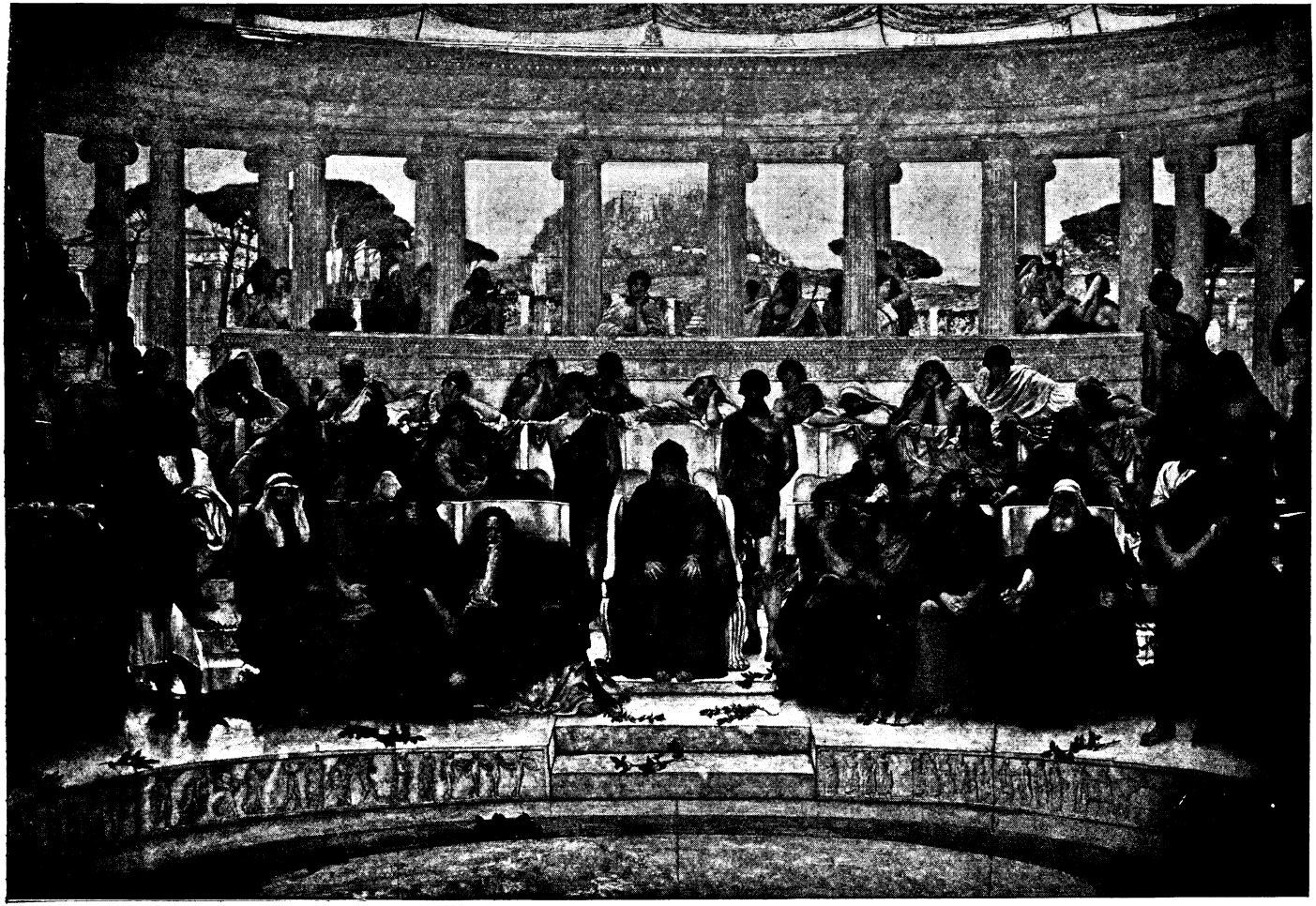
"ARIADNE DESERTED." BY SIR WILLIAM B. RICHMOND, R.A.

Releasing Prometheus," "The Procession of Bacchus," "Prometheus Bound," "Venus and Anchises," "Hero in the House of Hephaistos," "The Last Watch of Hero for Leander," "The Progress of Phaeton," "Landscape in Arcadia," "Hermes," "Icarus," and "An Audience at Athens," the subject of which is an audience watching the performance of the play of Aeschylus at the moment when Agamemnon is murdered by his wife, Clytemnestra. "The classic convention," wrote one of our best modern critics, "is as easily abused as it is hard to handle with an approach to perfection. Selection, its distinguishing principle, can only be exercised with profit upon material at once abundant and of sterling excellence." Given the man with power of selection, a man of taste, and that knowledge which supplies abundant material, then, as in the case of Sir William Richmond, we get work of sterling excellence.



"HERCULES RELEASING PROMETHEUS." BY SIR WILLIAM B. RICHMOND, R.A.

Honours have been showered upon him, and with reason. He was made Slade Professor at Oxford, in succession to Mr. Ruskin, in 1878, which post, however, as it involved labours that interfered with his other work, he resigned three years later. He was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1888, and a full Member in 1895; he was recipient of the degree of D.C.L. of Oxford in 1896, he is a Fellow of the Society of Arts and of the Society of Antiquaries; and an Honorary Associate of the Royal Society of Architects. He is Professor of Painting to the Royal Academy, from which chair he has delivered lectures of illuminating value on "Giotto," "Michael Angelo," "The Survival of Greek Influence on Modern Art," "The Evolution of Scripture," and many other subjects. He was made a K.C.B. at the time of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria's Jubilee; but perhaps the greatest honour of all conferred



"AN AUDIENCE AT ATHENS DURING THE REPRESENTATION OF 'AGAMEMNON.'" BY SIR WILLIAM B. RICHMOND, R.A.

From the original in the Birmingham Public Art Gallery, reproduced, by permission of the Corporation of Birmingham, from a photograph by Mansell & Co., Oxford Street, W.

upon him is the decoration of St. Paul's Cathedral, with which since 1891 he has been entrusted.

In 1891, Sir William was asked to investigate the possibilities of decorating the Cathedral, but the suggestion of the Dean and Chapter that he should do the work in fresco, in similar manner to the work he had already executed in that medium both at Cheltenham and on the walls of Mr. Hodgson's house, Lythe Hill, Haslemere, incomplete. "There are portions of St. Paul's," writes the Rev. Lewis Gilbertson, M.A., honorary minor canon of St. Paul's and rector of St. Martin at Ludgate, "which suggest that they were meant by Wren to receive ornament of some material richer than themselves. All the cupolas in the vaulting, both of the greater and lesser aisles, are composed of brick covered with plaster; so also are the pendentives supporting the cupolas and the 'quarter domes'—*i.e.*,

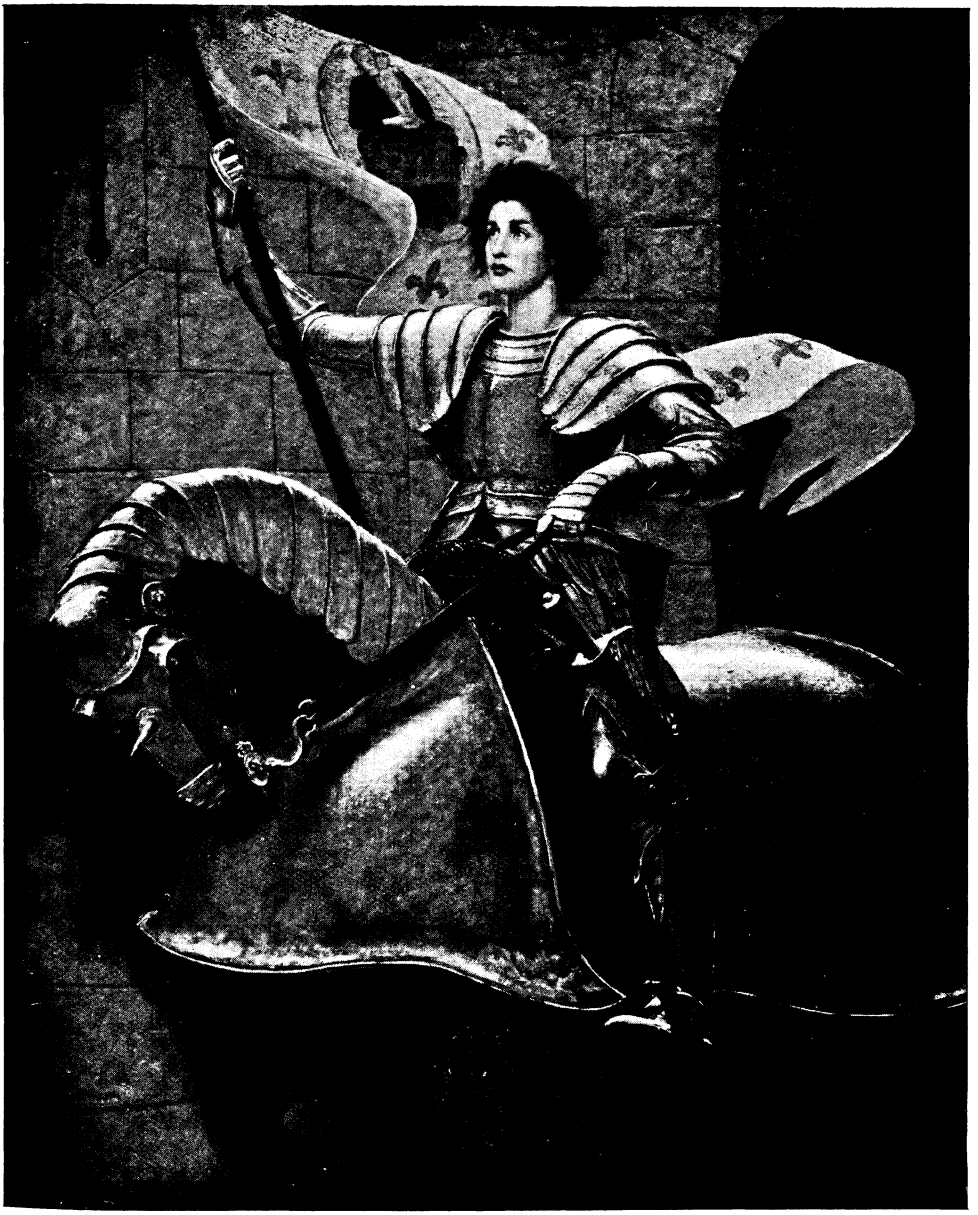


"THE DEATH OF ULYSSES." BY SIR WILLIAM B. RICHMOND, R.A.

he rejected, preferring to follow out Sir Christopher Wren's original idea that St. Paul's should be enriched and beautified "with mosaic, with gold." For, as we know by the "parentalia," Wren had intended by internal enrichment of the building to devote himself to those works of decoration which should give completeness to his designs, when his arraignment before Parliament and his ultimate dismissal, and the appointment of William Benson in his place, left his work the ceilings of the smaller openings round the dome area; the spandrils of the dome, which are now filled with mosaics, though they were built of stone, yet are of a softer material than that generally used, and, therefore, are legitimately treated in this fashion, reasoning for the moment from the point of view of the hints as to treatment which Wren bequeathed in the materials which he made use of." After consideration, Sir William Richmond recommended that

the mosaic treatment, which Wren would certainly have advocated, should be adopted.

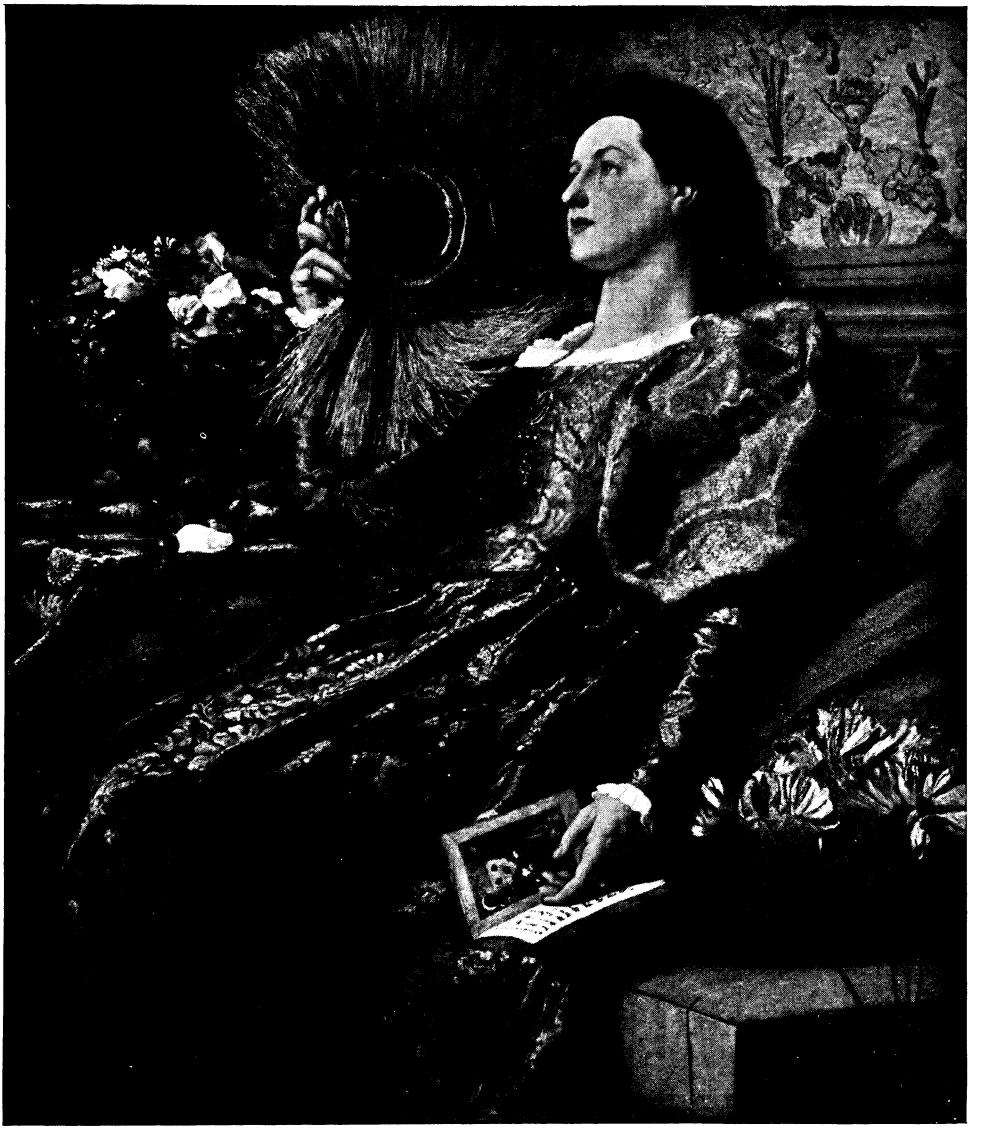
"The brilliancy of the reflecting surface of mosaic work," again to quote from Canon Gilbertson, "its permanence, its capacity for bearing cleaning without risk of injury, all mark it out as the ideal material for the decoration of London buildings. . . . In two important particulars, in his use of mosaics, Sir William Richmond has departed entirely from modern methods. He has abandoned the smooth, pictorial manner for the broader and ancient mode, in which the tesseræ are disposed in the imbedding cement in such a way as to show considerable interspaces, and he determined that every cube shall be placed in position separately upon the wall itself; it has been the custom



"JOAN OF ARC." BY SIR WILLIAM B. RICHMOND, R.A.

in recent times to arrange the design on paper or slate in the studio, and to apply it to the wall surface in blocks. Sir W. Richmond's method, which, indeed, is simply a reversion to the ancient manner, among other considerations which recommend it, has especially this

older methods of the work and doing it, not in the studio, but on the spot, was greatly helped in the technical difficulties by Messrs. Powell, who supplied the glass mosaic and one or two men accustomed to its practical application. Then, by training men himself,



MRS. FULLER-MAITLAND. BY SIR WILLIAM B. RICHMOND, R.A.

one—that it allows account to be taken of the particular position and surroundings in which the mosaic is set, and so secures a sense of unity in the whole effect which is likely to be wanting where this plan is not followed."

Sir William Richmond, in adhering to the

he has established a body of English workmen, and, under his own strict supervision over the whole work, the huge undertaking has slowly but gradually grown. The choir, the quarter domes, and quarter galleries, are now complete, and "apart from its particular



A CHILD'S PORTRAIT. BY SIR WILLIAM B. RICHMOND, R.A.



THE COUNTESS GROSVENOR. BY SIR WILLIAM B. RICHMOND, R.A.

importance in connection with St. Paul's, not only has a new departure in a branch of art been re-established, but we may reasonably hope impetus has been given to a great national industry."

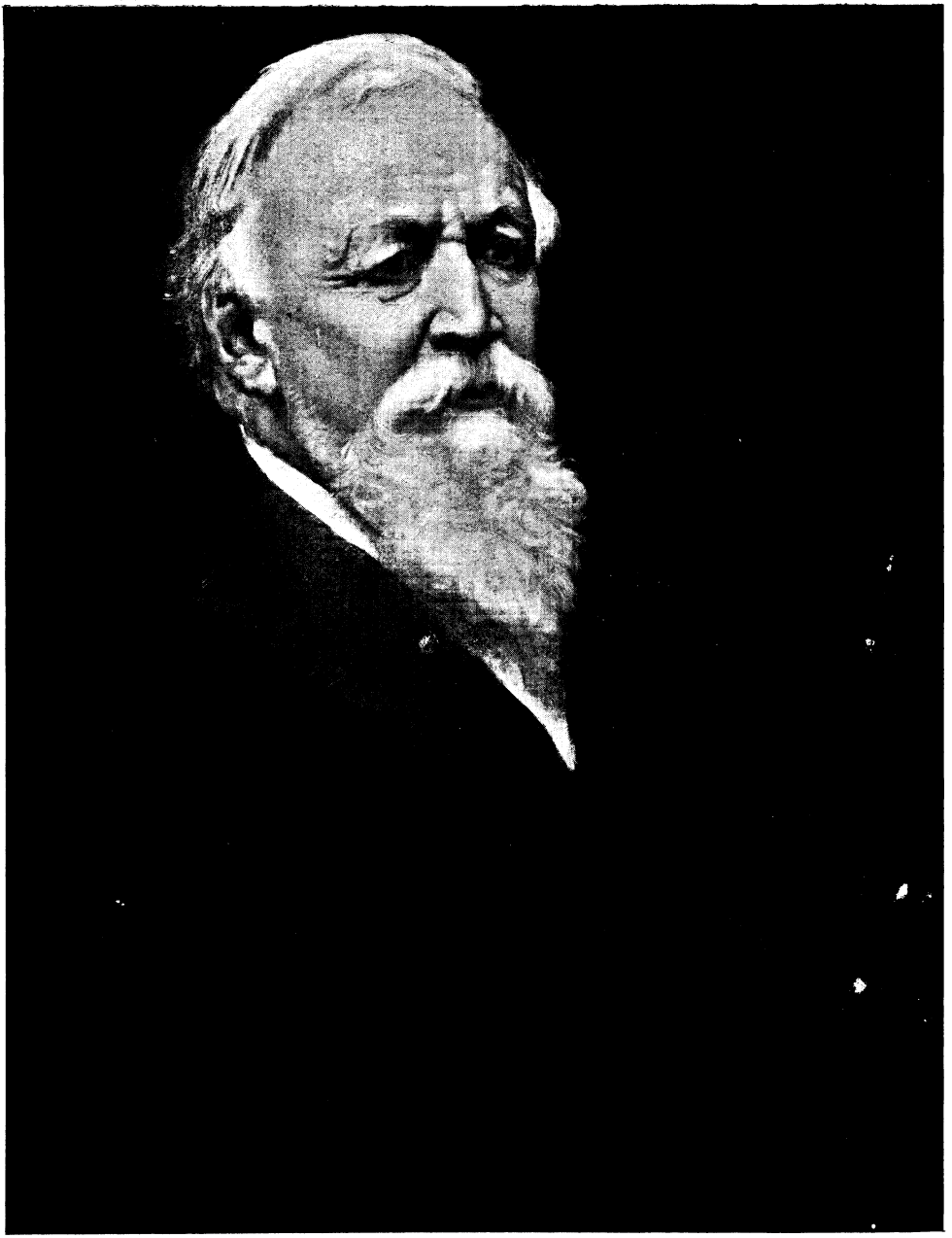
We are able to reproduce certain of the designs for this great series of mosaics, but unfortunately have not been able to obtain access to the earlier paintings on canvas, which also represent Sir William Richmond's affinity with themes from Holy Writ, such as his early "Ruth in the Field of Boaz," and his "David and Jonathan," and "The Song of Miriam." Of his later works, "Moses Viewing the Promised Land," and a large drawing of "Barabbas at the Foot of the Cross," reproductions may be seen in *The Art Journal* monograph on the artist's work, which also contains an elaborate study of the mosaics in St. Paul's, with much valuable



MRS. A. H. DRUMMOND. BY SIR WILLIAM B. RICHMOND, R.A.

matter by Miss Helen Lascelles, and additional notes by the artist himself.

In the general account of Sir William Richmond's work, there is one other large entry, for he has been gifted as have been few. Besides painting in oil, in water-colours, and in fresco, and placing in the cathedral of our capital, as memorials of his talent in mosaic, work of which Sir Christopher Wren would be unashamed, he has in sculpture revealed capacity of the highest. His "Homer" and his "A Greek Shepherd" are



ROBERT BROWNING. BY SIR WILLIAM B. RICHMOND, R.A.

alone sufficient to give him a distinguished position among sculptors, but his Hawarden monument is both an inspiration and an achievement.

Much eulogy has been his, especially from brother-artists qualified to understand and appreciate not only the lofty spirit which informs all his work, but also its masterly technique. Had he happened to overhear it, he would probably set particular store by a comment which we remember that Watts once made upon his work. "Richmond," said that great artist to Lord Leighton, as the two stood considering a picture upon the Academy walls, "knows more than any of us."

LORD STRANLEIGH, PHILANTHROPIST.

By ROBERT BARR.

II. THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERE.

LORD STRANLEIGH was not house-cleaning exactly, but rather furbishing up a bit, for he expected a distinguished visitor. The *rapprochement* between Russia and Britain was to be helped forward another notch by the entertainment of His Highness Prince Azov. A great banquet at the Guildhall had been arranged, presided over by the Lord Mayor, and attended by members of the Cabinet, Ambassadors, Ministers, representatives of science, art, and literature, with a generous sprinkling of English nobility; indeed, one or two scions of the Royal Family would occupy seats of honour at the Guildhall table. The Prince was to be presented with the Freedom of the City in a gold box, and during the first week of his stay in London some important and dignified function was allotted to every day.

Throughout this week the Prince was to be the guest of the Russian Embassy; after that he came to Lord Stranleigh, removed the decorations of his rank, and then the pair, who were old friends, intended to have a good time together like any other young men about town.

Stranleigh was giving final instructions regarding the preparation of the suite of rooms for Prince Azov's occupation, when the usually imperturbable Ponderby came in, betraying a state of agitation which filled his master with astonishment. Ponderby's stout figure seemed to have shrunk. His erstwhile rubicund countenance was actually pale, and his face wore a crestfallen expression almost akin to terror that was not without its touch of comicality. Indeed, Stranleigh almost smiled, and, in fact, would have smiled, had the victim been a man of less consequence than his indispensable valet. But instead of smiling, he spoke very calmly.

"Well, Ponderby, what's the trouble?"

"It's the Suffragettes, my lord. They demand to see your lordship, and won't believe you're not at home. There's about twenty of them, my lord."

"A mere mistake in identity, Ponderby. Tell them the address of the Premier is No. 10, Downing Street. Turn them away firmly but kindly."

"They won't be turned away, my lord. The moment the footman opened the door, they rushed him — nearly knocked Spilkins over, my lord—and now they're all in the hall, except one, who stands outside the door waving a banner inscribed 'Votes for Women.'"

This time Stranleigh did smile, in spite of himself, as he pictured the six-foot Spilkins, so cold and formal in manner, unexpectedly submerged at the door by an impetuous onrush.

"Ponderby, when you are captured, the only thing to do is to capitulate as gracefully as possible. Go to the hall, Ponderby, take a glance over the assembled women, and note the general tone of their costumes, then show them into whatever room best corresponds in colour and decoration with their own attire. Tell them I shall do myself the honour of waiting upon them within five minutes. Ask Spilkins to lure away the bannered young lady from outside the door, then, when you have them all seated comfortably, report progress to me."

The score of ladies were in quite a flutter when they learned how easily victory had come to them, and there arose a murmur of admiration as the solemn Ponderby ushered them into one of the most beautiful drawing-rooms they had ever seen. The girl with the banner rolled it up hastily, as if somehow it was out of keeping in a *salon* displaying such perfect taste. When all were seated, the silent Ponderby withdrew, closing the door very gently behind him.

"I wonder," said the lady with the banner, "if we are trapped? This all seems too easy. I believe Lord Stranleigh has got us in here so that he can slip out unseen,

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for his motor-car drove up just as I came in. I should have remained on guard."

She rose impulsively from her chair, and gave a flirt to the banner that partially unrolled it.

"I'm off to intercept him," she said; but a very quiet old lady, with beautiful grey hair, spoke soothingly.

"Sit down, my dear. I know Lord Stranleigh. He would not do such a thing."

The girl, but half convinced, slowly reseated herself. She was in a room where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile. She knew their sneaking ways. However, she made no audible protest, and her companions were all very quiet, as though rather awed by their surroundings and the celerity with which their desire had been accomplished. The door opened and the Earl of Stranleigh entered.

As he came in, the door closed behind him without any visible motive power. His eye took in very quietly, yet without seeming to do so, the group awaiting him, and then lit up with pleasure as it recognised the thin, delicate old lady with grey hair who rose to greet him. His indolent manner fell from him like a discarded cloak. He came forward rapidly, bent over her proffered slender, white hand, and raised it to his lips with old-fashioned courtesy.

"We have rather stormed your citadel," she began.

"Dear madam, had you only let me know you were coming, you would have found my door wide open for your reception, yet you come so splendidly chaperoned that I fear this may be a business visit and not a friendly call."

"I hope you will regard it as both."

"I cannot be so impartial, madam, and am certain to incline towards the friendliness, for, after all, I am but a poor business man."

"You are quite alone in that opinion, my lord. Indeed, we are here because of your latest *coup* in business, and so that we may not take you more by surprise than already has been the case, I warn you to prepare for a unanimous vote of censure."

"Dear lady," laughed Stranleigh, "why use a threat when I am eager to obey your slightest request?"

The girl who had been on guard slipped the stick, with its furled banner, out of sight behind her chair. This meeting was too much like a scene from a society play; there was nothing militant about it.

"Pray be seated, madam," said Stranleigh, "and that will allow me to take this chair fronting you all. They say that, when danger threatens, the best plan is to face it, which accordingly I do. To what successful *coup* do you refer?"

Stranleigh took a chair near a table.

"The newspapers have printed column after column about it. Assisted by the weight of your money, that arch-rascal Bannerdale secured his second line to the Pacific, and 'froze out,' I think is their term, —meaning ruined—a vast number of unfortunate men opposed to him."

"Yes," said Stranleigh, "I received many hundreds of letters on that subject, and, talking of votes of censure, I've been censured by every reputable journal in England. The incident just proves what I have been saying to you, namely, that I'm no man of business at all, but merely a gullible simpleton."

"Why, how can that be if it is true that you cleared nearly a million by the deal?"

"I certainly gained a sum of money—the amount of which I have not had time to inquire—but that was an unintentional side issue. I made no protest against what the journals said, yet I should be sorry for you to misjudge me. My mind has recently turned towards the possibility of giving away money by some method which will do good instead of harm. At a health resort on the Continent I met a man who seemed poor and ill, and at his behest I made a railway investment through a Frankfort firm. The profits, if any, were to go to him, while the loss, if any, was borne by me. It turned out that the person calling himself Garner was in reality the multi-millionaire railway king Bannerdale. He needed the use of my name, and secured it. He published a quite untrue statement that I was his partner, and thus was enabled to consummate the deal he had in hand. He never applied to me for a penny of the money I made on his behalf, and so, you see, instead of wearing the hoofs and horns presented to me by the Press, I was merely the victim of a man much shrewder than myself. I confess that the contumely heaped upon me has not caused me an hour's wakefulness, but if you ladies add a vote of censure, then shall I be indeed desolate."

Many of the delegation laughed, and it was evident his young lordship had nothing to fear from that quarter. The lady with grey hair now spoke, very gently and very charmingly.

"I am sure I express the sentiment of this committee when I say we are all glad to

know you invested in an American railway speculation solely to benefit a fellow-creature whom you supposed to be in distress. We came here hoping to show you a better use for your money than that to which you had devoted it."

"You mean, madam, that I should contribute to the cause of Woman's Suffrage?"

"Yes."

"That I am very pleased to do, and if you assist me by naming the amount, I will send a cheque to your treasurer at once."

"On behalf of my fellow-workers, not only of those here, but of the thousands labouring elsewhere for our cause, I thank you for your great generosity. Our mission now being accomplished, I shall detain you no longer than it takes to tender our gratitude for your kind reception of us."

The young man was rather confused as he listened to these words, and the slight ripple of applause they called forth, but the tension of the situation was relieved by the young woman who carried the banner rising to her feet.

"I thought our chairwoman would, perhaps, embody those sentiments, with which we all agree, in a formal vote of thanks, and that, in seconding this motion, I should find opportunity for speaking on a subject very interesting to me. I gathered from the Earl of Stranleigh's remarks that he has given some thought towards the distribution of money to aid the downtrodden and the afflicted. If this is so, I should like to ask what success has followed his philanthropy."

Stranleigh laughed a little and tried to shake off his embarrassment.

"My efforts can hardly be dignified by such a term as philanthropy. It is a question that bristles with difficulties. When I give a sovereign to a sober ragamuffin, if I meet him again before the money is spent, I regret to find he is then usually a drunk ragamuffin. In a larger way, where I depend on my own judgment, as was the case with the American I have spoken about, my effort has merely meant the discomfiture of people unknown to me that I would not willingly have injured. This is doubtless because I am rather a muddle-headed person, and a muddle-headed person with good intentions and plenty of money seems to be a distinct danger to the community. I try to inform myself of what wiser people have done, but my search has not proved encouraging.

"Through the genius of the late Sir Walter Besant, a great people's palace was erected in the East End, which, I am told, has failed in its object on account of the abstention of those it was intended to benefit.

"That gracious lady—whose memory is revered by us all—the late Baroness Burdett-Coutts, carried out what seemed a most practical project by building a huge market in the East End, where poor people might obtain good food at reasonable prices; but she merely disturbed, temporarily, the costermonger trade, and I think the great building, if not abandoned, is used for other purposes than the one for which it was erected. The poor, apparently, would have none of it.

"The other day, as I drove from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, I noticed along the road great iron pipes being ruined by rust, and learned from my dragoman that, years before, the Baroness had bestowed a very large sum of money for bringing the pure water of Solomon's wells to Jerusalem, which has always depended for its supply on the rains, gathered into filthy tanks. The bulk of the money had been stolen by Turkish officials, and these broken rusty pipes were the useless result of a most beneficent plan. So you understand my difficulty. I am quite willing to give, if assured the donations would accomplish any useful purpose."

"Don't you think," replied the young woman, "that these failures are due to the indolence and ignorance of the giver? The man with money, unless he has made it himself, is indolent, and therefore, to gain information, does not take the trouble a business person would expend before making an investment."

"Doubtless, madam, that is very true in my own case, for I am both indolent and ignorant. Money seems as dangerous to meddle with as dynamite. I read in the bankruptcy proceedings the other day of a young and industrious mechanic, earning good wages, whose uncle in Australia left him sixteen thousand pounds. That sum lasted him a year, or nearly so, and when it was spent, he got amazingly into debt, and now is adjudged a bankrupt, with no chance of his creditors receiving a penny. A year ago he was a useful and estimable citizen; to-day he is a vicious loafer, a human derelict."

"That may be an exceptional case," said the confident one.

"Perhaps. Have you any suggestion to make?"

"It seems to me, in the instances you cited, that neither the Baroness nor Sir Walter took the trouble to find out what the

poor really wanted or needed. They bestowed upon them, therefore, something they did not require. Now, I think a man with time at his disposal should examine the matter, as I may say, from the ground up. He might take an individual, study him, discover what was really needed, and supply the deficiency."

"Madam, you describe exactly what I did in the case of Mr. Bannerdale, *alias* Garner, yet see how narrowly I missed a vote of censure from you for that very action."

"My lord, have you ever seen the play, written by one of us, entitled 'Diana of Dobson's'?"

"I have not enjoyed that advantage."

"It deals very cleverly with the subject we are discussing."

"Very well; I shall secure a box at once."

Before the banner girl could say anything further, the lady with grey hair rose.

"I think," she said, smiling, "that the Earl of Stranleigh has earned the formal vote of thanks you suggested, and so, taking it as proposed and seconded, I beg to tender it and bid him farewell."

Saying this, she marshalled her following and departed.

When Lord Stranleigh left the Kingsway Theatre, he was thinking less of the employment problem in the play than about its acting. The actress, Miss Lena Ashwell, had been superb, and Norman McKinnel, whom he considered one of Britain's finest actors, caused him to wonder why McKinnel, having the production of the piece in his own hands, had chosen for himself the humble *rôle* of policeman, appearing only for five minutes or thereabouts in the darkened picture of the last act, which represented the outcasts dozing on the benches of the Thames Embankment.

Stranleigh walked down Kingsway to the Strand, entered the Gaiety Restaurant, and treated himself to a well-chosen supper. When he emerged, remembering the last scene of the play, he strolled down Arundel Street to the Thames Embankment, intended to be London's chief boulevard, although this thoroughfare, bordered by great luxurious hotels, becomes after nightfall an outdoor bedroom for the penniless—millionaire and pauper sleeping within a stone's throw of one another. However well the Thames Embankment may compare with a Parisian boulevard during the day, all the brightness of the latter is absent at night, for here no *cafés* and restaurants face the river.

Stranleigh's first impression was how well the actual benches of the Embankment imitated their counterfeit on the stage. Even the slow policeman who passed him walked with McKinnel's measured step. The young nobleman aroused the first sleeper, asked a few questions, and, receiving replies that he didn't in the least believe, presented the derelict with a sovereign, telling him to get something to eat and a more comfortable bed. This was repeated again and again, and monotonous iteration indicated that no denizen of the Embankment was there through any fault of his own.

Stranleigh knew that many a man who later became famous spent his first night in London on the Embankment, and he hoped that by chance he might succour some genius, yet he fancied in such case his benefaction would not have been so greedily accepted as it was by these outcasts. He yearned for someone to tell him to go to the devil and leave the slumberer to his rest, but he met no such cheering indication of independence combined with dire necessity.

The slow policeman marching by the parapet paused and watched him with some suspicion in his attitude. Finally the officer spoke.

"Rather a dangerous business, sir."

"I know it is," said Stranleigh, coming alongside. "I don't believe in indiscriminate charity, but these poor wretches are so far down in the social scale that perhaps a little unexpected money will do them no harm."

"That wasn't quite what I meant, sir," said the policeman, who seemed disappointed to find Stranleigh was not intoxicated, as he had evidently surmised. "Someone you've given money to has already passed on the word, and if you're not careful, you may find yourself waylaid and robbed. Better let me whistle a cab for you, sir."

Stranleigh laughed.

"I'm not afraid, officer, but I dare say you know the crowd a great deal better than I do. I gave a sovereign to each of those who have since vanished. I hoped I might learn something, but I find I haven't, so, if you don't mind, I'll make you my proxy charity commissioner."

The young man gave the astonished constable a handful of gold, and said—

"You take your percentage out of that, and distribute the rest among those who need it most."

"With your permission, sir," said the policeman, "I'll change all this into silver to-morrow, and divide it to-morrow night. I suppose you don't know that these people

would have some difficulty in getting honest change for a gold piece. None of them could convince anybody they came fairly by it."



"But the lamp shone full on the intellectual face of the stranger."

"I hadn't thought of that; I'm rather a bungler, you see."

"Well, sir, begging your pardon, you don't seem very wise."

"You've hit the nail on the head, officer. Good night to you."

"Better have a cab, sir. You may get your own head hit before you leave the Embankment."

"My skull is too thick to be injured by any of these weaklings. Good night."

"Good night, sir."

The policeman stood watching him as he walked rapidly towards Westminster, then he poured the gold into his pocket.

All those whom Stranleigh had aroused that night showed the cringing disposition of the very poor. They seemed anxious about one thing only, which was to say whatever might please the man who accosted them, in the hope of obtaining a sixpence or a few coppers at the end of the discourse. They represented merely human *débris*, and even the optimistic Stranleigh realised that they were of no use either to humanity or themselves. Whatever he gave them would be spent, and afterwards they would sink into the same condition in which he found them. He drew a deep sigh of disappointment at the result of his experiment.

He was nearing Westminster Bridge when he noticed some distance ahead a man whose arms rested on the top of the river wall, the one person, except the policeman, he had seen that night ignoring the meagre comfort of the benches. As he neared this person, Stranleigh stopped, and himself leaned against the parapet, just under the ornamental lamp-post that rose from the top of the wall. Stranleigh himself was in comparative obscurity, but the lamp shone full on the intellectual face of the stranger. It

was a pathetic countenance, indicating great refinement, but the stamp of starvation was visible on the pallid features. It reminded him of one of the pictures drawn by the late Fred Barnard to illustrate Dickens—the picture of Sidney Carton about to mount the scaffold, and looking back over his shoulder with the same wistful expression which was now before him in life.

Stranleigh remembered Fred Barnard with a pang of regret. One night, when they were dining together, Barnard had told him the history of the picture—how he searched in vain through London and Paris for any man whose face would realise his own dream of Sidney Carton. Then one night, under a lamp-post in Paris, he caught a momentary glimpse of the person who fulfilled his requirements—with refined features softened by the grief of a saviour—but the face was that of a woman, and he finished his well-known picture by placing a woman's head on a man's body.

Here, then, at last, was a fitting subject for any beneficence the young nobleman cared to bestow. Despite his evident hunger, the stranger appeared lost in some ecstatic dream, and he did not hear Stranleigh approach, but started when the latter accosted him, awakening from his reverie as if he knew not where he was.

"You pursue your meditations at a late hour, sir, and in an unaccustomed place."

After a moment the stranger replied—

"*Ya ne govoriù po Anglisky.*"

"Ah, you are a Russian, and do not speak English," commented Stranleigh, using somewhat haltingly the other's language. "I possess one or two good friends in Russia, but confess that my attempts to converse in their tongue meet respectful sympathy rather than commendation."

The stranger smiled, and his visionary eyes glistened with delight at even this attempt at his own speech.

"Do you understand French?" asked Stranleigh.

It appeared that the stranger did, and their future communication took place in that language, which the Russian spoke exceedingly well.

"As I told you," Stranleigh went on, "I have several friends in Russia, of whom I am very fond, and for their sakes I proffer my assistance if you happen to need it."

"You are most kind," replied the Russian, "and it is true, as doubtless you have surmised, that I am in dire straits. I have had nothing to eat for nearly forty-eight hours."

"That is a state of things permitting no delay in the amending. Blessed is he who has nothing, for he need fear no trap. Will you come with me to my house, since all the restaurants of London are closed?"

They walked together to Westminster Bridge, where a friendly policeman whistled for a wandering cab, and then looked with some astonishment at the strangely assorted pair. A hansom came flying across the bridge in response to the call. The richest man and the poorest in Europe got in together and drove to Stranleigh House, where his lordship found an excellent supper laid awaiting his return.

"Champagne?" asked Stranleigh.

The Russian hesitated.

"I suppose," he said at last, "you keep no vodka?"

"As it happens," said Stranleigh with a laugh, "I have just stocked a quantity of it—the best that can be found. My chief Russian friend is to visit me next week."

"I will take a little vodka, then," replied his guest, "since I have fallen into fortunate circumstances. I am sorry to be of such trouble, but the sudden change from hope to realisation has shown me how physically weak I am."

His fine white hand trembled as he raised the raw vodka to his lips, refusing to have its potency mitigated by water.

"Ah," he sighed, setting down the glass again, "that assures me I am still in the land of the living. I must now eat very sparingly."

They sat down together, the visitor diluting his vodka with water, still refusing champagne. After the meal Stranleigh pushed over to him a box of Russian cigarettes, then took one himself.

"Will you tell me all about it now," he said, "or shall we wait till morning?"

The Russian did not answer on the moment, which hesitation appeared to be a habit of his, but gazed about as if marvelling at the luxury in which he found himself. As the aromatic smoke of the cigarette rose in the air, he heaved a deep sigh of contentment.

"Does that mean, sir, that you offer a complete stranger the further hospitality of a bed? You hint I am to be here in the morning."

"Morning is so close upon us that it would not be worth your while searching for a lodging at this hour. Indeed, a stranger



"The young man . . . deftly caught the missile."

with no English might meet difficulty in obtaining a resting-place, and, besides, you could find nothing in London so comfortable as it is my privilege to offer."

"Sir, I hesitate to trespass——"

"It is no trespass, monsieur. This is a bachelor establishment, and I consult no one's convenience but my own or that of my guest, and I assure you of an English welcome, recalling to your mind that our countries are friendly."

"Gospodín, if you allow me to sleep here on the sofa, it will be as Heaven compared with the place where you found me."

Stranleigh laughed.

"In one at least of your Eastern religions there are seven heavens, and I prefer to send you to the seventh rather than the first. And now let us introduce ourselves. My name is Stranleigh."

"I am Vassili Nicolaievna. Until recently I was a student at the University of St. Petersburg."

"Did you take a literary course there? I have guessed you to be a poet. Am I right or wrong?"

"Both, Gospodín Stranleigh. I dream poetry, but cannot express it in words. Still, I try to give expression to my dreams through these." He stretched out his hands — white, slight, but nevertheless powerful. "I have devoted my life to music, and so did not finish the course at the University. May I give you a song for my supper?"

He waved a hand towards the very splendid grand piano which stood at the end of the dining-room, ready, when Stranleigh gave a bachelor dinner, for the entertainment of his guests.

"I should be delighted," said his lordship.

The Russian opened the instrument and sat down, plunging into a weird, fantastic, rather terrible selection that Stranleigh had never heard before. Then, after a moment's pause, he made the piano sing like a nightingale.

"Heaven prosper us," ejaculated Stranleigh, when he rose, "I have never before heard that piano! You possess all the power of Rubinstein and all the delicacy of Paderewski. Who wrote that music?"

"Mine, mine, mine!" cried Nicolaievna. "Rubinstein was a Russian, and Paderewski is a Pole, but in music both belong to the past. 'Tis not up their stairway I am climbing. Wagner is the first step in my ascent, then Strauss with his 'Elektra.' By and by it will be Vassili Nicolaievna. I came to London to play my soul-stirring symphony of humanity—a composition to echo round the world. I expected help from my musical brethren, but such is the jealousy in the ranks of those who should most appreciate me that they turned the cold shoulder. They declare I am not to be heard, and without money I am powerless."

"I should have thought," said Stranleigh, "that any true musician would welcome you with open arms."

"It is not so," exclaimed Vassili. "They are all comfortably situated here, and why should I come to disturb their slumbers? Jealousy, jealousy, jealousy! Each knows in his heart that I tower above him as the peak of the Kremlin looks down upon the lowest hovel in Petersburg."

Stranleigh could scarcely repress a smile at the colossal conceit of the man, but nevertheless, from his playing and his composition, he deemed it justifiable, and attributed its blatant expression to the influence of vodka. The Russian's arms were gesticulating like those of a Sicilian actor as he continued—

"My great symphony of humanity, could I but be allowed to render it here in London, will concentrate upon me the attention of the universe. The echoes of its harmonies and its discords will ring down the ages, and yet am I nullified for the lack of a hundred roubles."

"No, you are not," said Stranleigh. "You wish to collect a critical audience here in London, and perform before it?"

"Yes," answered the Russian.

"Very well, I will finance you—not with a hundred roubles, but ten thousand, if you desire them, and the money is at your disposal to-morrow morning."

Greatly to Stranleigh's embarrassment, the mad musician flung himself at his lordship's feet, seized a reluctant hand, and covered it with kisses.

"Tut, tut!" cried Stranleigh with an uneasy laugh. "We are not rehearsing a sentimental play, you know. You are overwrought, and so, for that matter, am I. I consider you the greatest genius I have ever met, and your music will haunt me while I live. Have no fear that you will languish for lack of opportunity, but meantime let us to bed, for there is strenuous work to do in the morning."

"Work to do! Work to do! Yes, and I must keep my head cool and my hands steady."

He held out these capable instruments of his will, and Stranleigh touched the bell.

On the day that the luncheon to Prince Azov was given at the Guildhall, one of those imposing processions in which Londoners delight set out from the Russian Embassy in Belgrave Square, proceeded up Grosvenor Square to Hyde Park, then down Piccadilly to St. James's Street, and so through Pall Mall, the Strand, and Fleet Street, to the City. There were several carriages, preceded and followed by a clanking company of horsemen, whose breastplates glittered in the sun, and whose gay uniforms added a touch of colour to the drab streets through which they passed.

The foremost carriage contained the Russian Ambassador, accompanied by several high nobles of that Empire. In the next carriage sat only two persons, Prince Azov, the honoured guest of the day, and by his side his most familiar English friend, the Earl of Stranleigh.

The streets on either side were lined with troops, and behind them was massed a very good-natured crowd, who vociferously cheered the spectacle. Along Piccadilly, down St. James's Street, and to the further end of Pall Mall, the clubs were resplendent with bunting and decorations, and in the Strand Venetian masts had been set up. All London, seemingly, was enjoying a holiday, turning out to honour the White Czar's representative. Everywhere the procession was welcomed by hurrahs and gladsome greeting, the waving of hats and handkerchiefs, and, indeed, the young Prince, who smilingly acknowledged the enthusiasm, was a magnificent specimen of manhood, clad in Oriental splendour, and well worth coming out to see.

As they passed into the Strand, His Highness said: "You are a fortunate people, Stranleigh. I should feel rather nervous if taking part in a similar display through the streets of Petersburg."

"Oh, you are quite safe here," replied his lordship. "Rightly or wrongly, we are so tender with the denizens of the under-world, that they will not risk their own safety——"

Stranleigh sprang suddenly to his feet and stood covering the Prince with his body.

"Seize that man!" he shouted in a voice that rang out above the cheers, so startling was its note.

To Stranleigh the whole mob had but one face—the pallid, ecstatic countenance of the mad musician. His right hand was raised above his head, grasping a black iron ball, and there for one brief section of a moment it paused as the amazed Nihilist caught sight of his benefactor; but before a policeman could move, a spasm of determination swept all reluctance from that wonderful face, and he launched his bomb straight at the carriage.

Stranleigh in his time had been a notable cricketer, saving many a hard-fought field for his public school and college, and more than one person in that day's crowd, not yet realising what had happened, noted with admiration how the young man, quite unconsciously, assumed the attitude of a fielder, and deftly caught the missile, allowing it to swing gently to rest past his body.

Now the policeman grasped the Nihilist, who struggled fiercely for a moment and then grew suddenly calm. The procession had stopped. The crowd was silent. An officer of the force came out from a restaurant, carrying a pail of water, and as he held this up to Stranleigh, the latter very gingerly placed within it the deadly sphere. The anarchist, as he was led away, shouted loudly—

"*Khoroshó proshtchàitè, Gospodin. Skólko platit?*"

"What does he say?" whispered Stranleigh, as he sat down again beside the imperturbable Prince, who during this time had not changed countenance or moved a muscle.

"His Russian is rather incoherent. I fear the man is excited. He appears to address you, saying it's all very well, bids you goodbye, and asserts he will pay the price, or perhaps rather asks what it will cost—an inquiry that is a trifle belated. Poor chap! We are both rather helpless—he in his place, I in mine."

"He is a man of genius," said Stranleigh—"towering genius, who threw away with that bomb a career of the greatest."

Another complete episode in the eventful career of Lord Stranleigh, Philanthropist, will appear in the February Number.

HUMOUR IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

BY SIR HENRY LUCY
("TOBY, M.P.," OF *Punch*).

I HAVE a vivid recollection of landing on the Cunard Wharf at New York, during a recent visit to the United States, and finding myself confronted by a group of a dozen strangers who gave me friendly greeting. I soon learned that they were representatives of a mighty Press, bent upon interviewing the latest arrival. Invariably their shorter catechism began with the query: "What do you think is the difference between American and English humour?"

In considering the matter, especially in reference to the House of Commons, it may be well to attempt to define humour. "What is truth?" judicial-minded Pilate forlornly asked. "What is humour?" I inquire of the dictionary. The answer is: "A facetious or jocular turn of mind in conversation; the disposition to find, or the faculty of finding, ludicrous aspects or suggestions in common facts or notions."



THE PARLIAMENTARY HAT: "THE HONOURABLE GENTLEMAN WHO HAS JUST SAT DOWN——"

The definition is admirable, leaving little to be desired. It may be supplemented by what Thackeray wrote when making a study of Dickens: "I should call humour a mixture of love and wit." That, too, is excellent, happily suggesting the difference between wit and humour. Wit is apt to scorch. Humour plays round a victim with lambent flame that does not, or should not, singe a hair. Dickens was a humorist with a tendency towards the farcical. Thackeray was a humorist apt upon occasion to cut with the fine razor edge of wit.

That every nation has its style of humour as distinctive as its language is a fact easier to realise than to explain. The humour of the American, the French, the English, the Irish, and the Scotch nations is absolutely distinct. The difference is indefinable. I should say that where affinity comes in, it is closer between the Americans and the Scotch than between any other two races. With respect to American humour and English, a difference that leaps to the eye is that one is dry, the other humid. As becomes their younger blood, their rolling prairies, and their exhilarating atmosphere, Americans are, in the matter of humour, more extravagant than the English. There is a delicious gravity about it refreshing to the heart. In some of its phases it begins at the pace of a funeral march, abruptly, surprisingly finishing up at a gallop. A tone of assumed melancholy in the writings of Artemus Ward supplies the necessary background to the sudden illumination of his humour. Mark Twain's manner, whether in conversation or in writing, was also weighted by supreme gravity, which made the joke more effective when it flashed forth.

"What an ornament and safeguard is humour!" Emerson wrote, discoursing upon Sir Walter Scott. "Far better than wit for a poet and writer. It is a genius itself, and so defends from mediocrity." Often in a railway train, in an omnibus, too frequently at a

dinner-table, I observe a man and wife who, it is obvious, are incapable of discovering "ludicrous aspects or suggestions in common facts or notions." I suppose there are millions of respectable, honest households where from morning till night nobody laughs.

The odd thing is that there are few things mankind is more grateful for than to be made to laugh. Nor does it need a supreme touch of humour to satisfy desire. The House of Commons, in which, after close and intimate study extending through nearly forty years, I find the most perfect microcosm of the British race, the desire to be amused is almost abject. A Minister who, expounding a Bill, has furtively supplied himself with a tumbler of slightly coloured water, and, enforcing his argument, with sweeping gesture upsets it, is almost sure to get his Bill read a second time without a division. A private Member who, concluding his speech, sits down on his hat, incautiously placed on the bench behind him, is a prime favourite for the rest of the evening.

This particular development of unconscious humour is likely to pall by frequency of repetition. In a recent Session it gained an effective accessory. A Member, speaking from behind the Treasury Bench, resuming his seat at the close of a speech, crashed down on the hat of his neighbour. It is good form in



MR. "TIM" HEALY.



HIS LONGEST DAY.

these circumstances for the victim to betray no annoyance. He should absolutely ignore the incident, affecting to regard it as part of ordinary Parliamentary proceedings. In this case it happened that the owner of the outraged hat followed its assailant in debate. Taking up the wreck, straightening it out with the air of being quite accustomed to find it in this plight, he commenced his speech with the familiar remark: "The Hon. Member who has just sat down——"

"On your hat," said Colonel Mark Lockwood, completing the sentence.

"Let me write the songs of the people, and I don't care who makes their laws," is a frequently quoted aphorism. It may be paraphrased in a form truthfully applicable to the House of Commons. "Let me make the House laugh, and I don't care who convinces it by argument." This yearning after the lighter side of things is natural and irresistible. Having sat for eight or ten hours listening to a succession of speakers hammering away at a technical or otherwise tiresome topic, there is great refreshment in a burst of laughter. From period to period, following on a series of General Elections, the House of Commons necessarily varies in individuality of character, and consequently in general tone and aspect. But it never loses its thirst for amusement. As hinted at in the case of the crushed hats, it is so grateful for any contribution to its amusement that it is not particular as to the delicacy of the humour or the poignancy of the wit.

Time was when the Irish Members supplied both with rich generosity. They flooded

the House of Commons with rich and rare individuality of the kind heretofore familiar to the Saxon chiefly in the novels of Lever and Lover. That type has disappeared from the present House. The only Irish Member who to-day habitually rises to flights of humour is Mr. Tim Healy, and his style is severely sardonic. For the rest, the modern Irish Member is as prosy as he is fluent, his harangues being unlit by heaven-sent flashes of wit or humour.

Amidst many other distinct types, I recall a serious-mannered Irish Member named Blake, whose memory is kept green by a brief correspondence he read to a delighted House. It was casually introduced in a speech delivered in debate on an Irish Sunday Closing Bill. Mr. Blake, taking the House into friendly confidence, informed it that he had an uncle who regularly took six tumblers of whisky toddy per day. After much consideration, he felt it his duty to write and remonstrate with his erring relative. The letter ran thus—

"MY DEAR UNCLE,—I write to say how pleased I should be if you could see your way to giving up your six glasses of whisky a day. I am sure you would find many advantages in doing so, the greatest of which would be that, as I am persuaded, it would be the means of lengthening your days."

The uncle replied—

"MY DEAR NEPHEW,—I am much obliged to you for your dutiful letter. I was so struck by what you said—in particular by your kind wish to lengthen my days—that last Friday I gave up the whisky. I believe you're right, my boy, as to my days being lengthened, for, bedad, it was the longest day I ever remember."

Another hero of old Coercion days was an Irish Member named Pyne. The Land League and the Irish Office were at the time at grips, the former having promulgated their historic edict forbidding the payment of rent. Mr. Pyne one night told the House, not less delighted on the Unionist side than among the Home Rulers, how he got over the difficulty. Taking out his watch, he showed those seated near him how on its back was roughly engraved the legend: "Pay no rent." Whenever in troubled times a peasant farmer came to him for advice as to what they should do under pressure of the landlord clamouring for his dues, Mr. Pyne solemnly shook his head.

"I cannot," he said, "express my views on the subject, for Mr. Balfour" (then Chief Secretary) "says they are illegal. But I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll show you what time of day it is."



BERNAL OSBORNE.

And, holding out his watch, the perturbed tenant read upon it the admonitory legend.

Since I first knew the House there has always been some privileged jester permitted to flout authority with the freedom granted to the court fool in earlier times. The earliest of whom I have personal recollection was Bernal Osborne, a well-known character in the Parliament that saw Disraeli in power as well as in office, a concatenation of circumstance not theretofore familiar. His wit was rather corrosive than genial. It chiefly shone in the form of personal observations detrimental to the person concerned.

One day, when the question of the union of Church and State was under discussion, someone interposed a correction of one of Osborne's wild assertions. Turning upon him with rude stare, Osborne said: "I do not know who the hon. gentleman is, but he looks like a Nonconformist."

The humour of this wants explaining. It lies in the incongruity of the suggestion that there are distinctive features in a man's appearance in these modern days that would cause him to be recognised as a Nonconformist. The implication was that the interrupter was ignorant, muddle-headed, ill-mannered, and therefore a Nonconformist. Such as it was, the jest had a great reception, notably from the Church party.

Horsman was contemporary with Bernal

Osborne during the term of his wearing the cap and bells, and in course of time succeeded him. His wit was as artificial as his style was stilted. He was memorable rather as being the cause of other people saying good things than of saying them himself. Disraeli hit him off with scathing fidelity when he described him as "a superior person." Jacob Bright, brother of the great tribune, a well-meaning but exceedingly dull personage, following Horsman in debate, accidentally stumbled on one of his only two *bons mots*, both undesigned. Meaning to allude to Horsman as "the chartered libertine of debate," he substituted the adjective "shattered."

Jacob Bright's other verbal success was when Lord Randolph Churchill, then Member for Woodstock, was reaching the zenith of fame as Leader of the Fourth Party. Jacob alluded to him in debate as "the Hon. Member for Woodcock." To the quick fancy of the House, ever on the look-out for amusement, this verbal error seemed to fit so exactly Lord Randolph's habit of cock-a-hooping that the name stuck.

Next in succession came Sir Wilfrid Lawson, who wore the cap and jangled the bells for a longer period than either of his immediate predecessors. His style differed from theirs. It was scarcely less personal, but was ever more genial. Notwithstanding his fanaticism in the matter of teetotalism, he was gifted with a large fund of common-sense and some political acumen. Through his mind flashed those bright lights, revealing hidden points of resemblance between



THE WATCH.



SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT'S APPRECIATION.

apparent incongruities, the sudden making clear of which mainly constitutes what we call humour.

There was a Member of the House of Commons, Thomas Collins by name, who, though exceedingly wealthy, was careful about many things, especially odd sixpences. He was returned for Naresborough at a by-election, but some days elapsed before he put in appearance at the House.

"Odd, isn't it," somebody said to Sir Wilfrid, "that Tom Collins doesn't turn up?"

"Not at all, not at all," said Sir Wilfrid; "he's waiting for an excursion train."

One other story Sir Wilfrid kept for private circulation, which was a pity, since, if told to the Speaker, it would have brought down the House. One day, on a week-end visit to the country, the rigid apostle of temperance made the acquaintance of a sharp young lady of some seven summers, with whom he held lively conversation. On leaving her, he said—

"Now, my dear, we have been talking some time. I am sure you have no idea who I am."

"Oh, yes, I have," missy replied; "you are the celebrated drunkard."

Although wit and humour are powerful accessories to influence in the House of Commons, it cannot be said that the present House presents sparkling specimens of the cult. Mr. Balfour has a keen sense of humour. But in this matter he is rather receptive than contributive. Nevertheless, from time to time he enlivens his discourse

with little asides that hugely delight his audience. Mr. Asquith resembles his great leader, Mr. Gladstone, inasmuch as it is the fashion to deny him a sense of humour. He is actually less open to the imputation than was Mr. Gladstone. For the latter, as to Rab, the dog immortalised by Dr. Brown, life was too serious for him to find room for frivolities. Yet those admitted to the privilege of social intercourse with Mr. Gladstone will testify that he had a considerable fund of humorous stories, which lost no point in the telling, his face, in later days, wrinkling into a marvellous smile as he spoke. To those who knew him only in his capacity in the House of Commons, or on the public platform, it will come as a shock to know that there was a time—certainly it was in University days—when the great statesman not only sang "Jim Crow," but performed the customary saltatory accompaniment.

Mr. Asquith, mellowed by success, assured of his position as Leader of the House of Commons, has of late developed a tendency to humour he would do well to cultivate. For the rest, with two exceptions, His Majesty's Ministers are not accustomed to disturb debate by the evolution of eruptive laughter. When in Opposition, a free-lance below the gangway, Mr. Lloyd George's speech was full of quips and cranks. Sobered by the responsibility of office, he is more reticent. But when he gets away from school, and goes playing on public platforms in the provinces, old habit asserts itself.

Mr. Winston Churchill, when he lets himself go, brims over with audacious sayings, that frequently rise to the height of wit. By unwritten law, in obedience to an instinct unmistakably felt, though difficult to define, it does not do for a young Minister to be funny on the Treasury Bench. In years to come, when the Home Secretary has reached the pre-eminence he is resolved to obtain, he will have a free hand, and may be trusted to use it. Meanwhile, we have his characterisation of a variation from the paled pathway of truth marked in connection with the controversy that raged round Chinese labour in South Africa. His attention being called to the matter by a question addressed to him whilst he was Under-Secretary for the Colonies, he admitted that the statement challenged was a "terminological inexactitude." The phrase has stuck, and is found useful in cases where it is desirable to refrain from plain language and call a man a confirmed liar.

The wittiest man known to the House of Commons since the days of Disraeli, of whom he was an appreciative pupil, was Sir William Harcourt. His *forte* was wit rather than humour, by far the more dangerous weapon. That he was conscious of the distinction appeared in a letter intended for publication, which some years before his death he addressed to me. "Humour," he wrote, "above all, good humour, is the salt of life, and for many years you have applied this antiseptic to the House of Commons with a delicate touch that never wounds."

Harcourt, it must be admitted, assuming that punishment was merited, did not mind whom he wounded, so that he worked off his joke. He hit out all round with fine impartiality that spared neither friend nor foe. He was, perhaps, even brighter in private conversation than in public speech. His sallies, when unprepared, were more effective. He brought his impromptus down to the House of Commons written out on foolscap paper, and the rustle of turned-over manuscript is a deadly accessory to a joke. Nevertheless, he was a great joy to the House, and has left behind him no successor.

SENLAC.

I HAVE dreamed a dream, in my sound sleep lying:
White were the fields, and the light o' day was dying,
And over me and round me were the grey geese crying.

Live was the air with the thin shrill noise of them,
With the swift hissing flight and the fierce fateful voice of them,
Seeking high and low for the deeds that are the joys of them.

Red, ah, red, the stream where the grey goose dips her wing,
For bathing of her plumage a rare and goodly spring,
Where lie down serf and noble, the bondman and the king.

C. FOX SMITH.

AUSTIN'S HIDEOUS SWEETNESS.

By KEBLE HOWARD,

Author of "The Smiths of Surbiton," "The Whip Hand," etc.



USTIN and Celia, my young married friends, had invited me to dinner. Since we were to go on to the theatre afterwards, 7.15 sharp was the time appointed. At 7.30 Celia had not yet arrived home.

"Too bad of her!" I said sympathetically.

Austin showed me an expression of surprise with just a dash of resentment in it. I was meant to understand, from the saintly roll of the eyes, that I had exceeded the privileges even of an intimate friend.

"Well," I continued, trying to justify myself, "after you've bought the tickets, and all that sort of thing."

"You may be sure that there is some excellent reason for her non-appearance." His voice had a mellifluous quality that was almost sickening. "I, surely, am alone entitled to call my wife's conduct into question."

"I'm not so sure about that," I retorted, rather nettled. "You asked me to dinner at a quarter-past seven. Celia even added that very objectionable word 'sharp.' I was here, as you know, at a quarter-past seven—'sharp.' It is now five-and-twenty minutes to eight. Granting that she returns at this instant, it will take her at least half an hour to dress. The dinner will be spoilt, and we shall be late for the theatre."

"'Better a dinner of herbs,'" he replied beautifully, "'where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.'"

"Which means, in simple English, that you're afraid of her."

"My poor fool——" he began. But this was a little too much. With Celia to back him up, of course, Austin is invincible, but I can always squeeze a decent amount of respect out of him when I get him alone. I made for my hat.

"Don't go!" he cried, impulsively catching me by the tail of my dress-coat. "She'll be here in a minute. I'm sure of it."

"That's not the point. Why should I stay to be made the victim of your insufferable air of superiority? Of all your poses, this seems to me the most horrible."

"It isn't a pose," he protested, handing me the cigarettes. "I have been reading a very beautiful article in—in one of the weekly reviews on 'The Ideal Husband.' Let me read you an extract from it."

He produced a leaf—much creased and folded—from a popular penny journal. Although he was careful to hold it at a distance, I recognised the size of the page and the style of type.

"Listen. These fine words are written by a famous dancer who has taken London by storm: 'If I loved a man, I would do anything to please him, but there must be no question of my having to do it. And just because he left me free, so should I endeavour in every respect to observe not only the letter, but the spirit of matrimonial law and relations. Therefore I think the ideal husband would be, above all things, a sympathetic man, who would understand that a woman takes a pride in giving that obedience which it is his legal right to command, but which he never should command—that is, if he is happily married.'"

Austin refolded the precious extract and slipped it back into his pocket. Then, after an affecting little pause, he turned and faced me.

"Well? Can you understand it?"

"Perfectly. How long have you been carting it about with you?"

"I had the good fortune to light upon that beautiful passage some ten days ago."

"And you've been trying to act up to it ever since, I suppose?"

"I have succeeded in acting up to it ever since."

"With this result?" I glanced at the clock. Five minutes to eight, it said bluntly.

"I have already told you that there is sure to be some excellent reason for the little delay. Celia is one of the most punctual people in the world.

"She was," I admitted.

"D'you mean to insinuate that she would

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take advantage of my—my leniency to keep the dinner waiting and make us late for the theatre?"

"Certainly not. She's much too considerate." (The clock struck eight.)

"Very good of you to admit it!"

"By the way," I said presently, taking another cigarette to allay the awful pangs, "does she know what you're up to?"

"I don't understand you."

"Have you told her about the article?"

"Why should I?"

"Isn't it possible that she may find the sudden change a little startling, not to say puzzling?"

"You talk as though I had been in the habit of bullying her."

"No, no, not that. But you certainly used to grumble when things didn't go quite the right way, didn't you, now?"

"Those unhappy days are all over."

"I shouldn't have called them such very unhappy days."

"Men cannot appreciate the finer sorrows of women."

"I suppose not. Still, Celia always seemed to me pretty buckish."

"That was a mask to hide her real feelings, poor girl!"

"And now, I take it, she has abandoned the mask?"

"Not entirely," said Austin doubtfully, "but I think I may say that she is abandoning it."

Celia came home at a quarter-past eight, exactly one hour late for dinner and hopelessly late for the theatre.

"Sorry," she said, giving my hand a careless little shake. "Got interested in a game of croquet, and had to finish it. What are you looking so cross about?"

"I want my dinner," I said, looking her very hard in the eyes. She turned away quickly. She was up to some devilment, and she knew that I had seen through it.

"Austin doesn't mind, do you, old boy?"

"Not a bit, darling."

"You're not hungry, are you, dearest?"

"Not a bit, my sweet."

"I knew you'd say that. Would you like me to sit down to dinner as I am, or shall I dress first?"

"Whichever you prefer, Celia dear."

"Then I think I'll dress."

"If you do," I observed with quiet determination, "I'm going somewhere else for my dinner."

"Don't let us detain you," said Austin coldly.

"I won't. Good evening!"

"Don't be silly!" Celia put Austin's arm through mine, and pushed us both in the direction of the dining-room. "I shan't be two minutes."

"You see," observed Austin, with a smile of triumph as she sped upstairs.

I kept my own counsel and awaited developments.

II.

THERE is nothing like marriage to develop the power of endurance. Austin persisted in being an ideal husband so long that Celia, in the end, came round to my little place to pour out tea and her troubles. Out of loyalty to Austin, I had to let her explain the situation, difficult though I knew she would find it.

"Have you," she said at last, "any books on insanity?"

"I'm afraid not, but they can be bought quite cheaply to suit all tastes."

"I want to read up something about symptoms. Do you happen to know anything about incipient insanity?"

"Let me see. Don't they say that talking to oneself is a sign of it?"

"I believe so, but he doesn't do that."

"'He' being——"

"In strict confidence?"

"As strict as ever."

"Well, then—Austin."

"By Jove, I'm sorry to hear that!"

"It's only a guess, of course, but I can't account for his conduct in any other way."

"What's he been doing? Smashing the furniture? Making faces at people out of the window?"

"Just the opposite. You remember the extraordinary way he went on the other night, when I came home an hour late for dinner?"

"I thought him very sweet and forgiving."

"Oh, for Heaven's sake, don't *you* begin it! You know perfectly well that he ought to have been very angry—boxed my ears or shaken me, or done something of that sort."

"My dear Celia, I can't imagine——"

"Rubbish! It was unpardonable to keep you both waiting until the dinner was spoilt, and sacrifice the tickets for the theatre, wasn't it? Say it was, or I think I shall go mad myself!"

"Well, then, I think you behaved like a selfish, inconsiderate, impertinent little cat!"

Celia closed her eyes and drew a long sigh of exquisite pleasure. "Please—please go on," she murmured. "You don't know

what a relief it is to be talked to like that!"

As it happened, I had a good many things on my mind about that wretched dinner, and I let them all go. When I had finished, she wore the air of a person who had just taken a glass of champagne after a Turkish bath.

"Is that really all?"

"I can't think of anything else at the moment."



"'Sorry,' she said, giving my hand a careless little shake."

"Perhaps I can spur you to renewed efforts. I was late on purpose."

"You have the effrontery to sit there, eating my superfine chocolates, and tell me that?"

"I have. That was all a lie about the croquet. I was just as hungry as you, and frightfully keen to go to the theatre, but I was determined to break down Austin's hideous sweetness."

"You didn't succeed."

"Don't taunt me with it. And try to forget that nasty dinner, won't you?" She rose and came towards me with both hands outstretched.

"You're not going already?" I cried.

"I shall unless you say that I'm forgiven."

"But there's still half a box of chocolates!"

"I shall be compelled to take those with me."

"You're forgiven."

"Good! Now I want you to set your wits to work and try to think out something that would make the greatest saint who ever lived dance with rage. Take your time over it."

We were silent for at least five minutes. Then I had a brilliant idea. I suggested that she should take his carefully-coloured meerschaum pipe and, before his very eyes, throw it to the dog for a plaything.

"My dear man," said Celia, "that wouldn't be nearly strong enough. I've done much worse things than that without making the least impression on him."

"Oh, you have, have you?"

"Of course I have. When a woman's fighting for her happiness, you don't suppose she sticks at a trifle, do you?"

"It might be as well if you told me a few of the things you've tried."

"I will, but you must bear in mind that it hurt me frightfully to do them. You know how keen he was on his strawberry-bed? The day after you came to dinner I had it all dug over and planted with potatoes. I had to give Evans half-a-crown for himself, and tell him that the doctor had forbidden Mr. Grain to eat strawberries."

"How did he take it?"

"With fiendish resignation. Told Evans that I had made a little mistake, but it was probably all for the best. I could have cried with disappointment."

"That would have been fatal."

"Of course. My next step was to invite a particularly loathsome aunt of mine to stay with us over the week-end."

"Did she come?"

"Rather—stayed a week. Austin hates

her just as much as I do, but he made such a fuss of her that she lost her head and began to rearrange the drawing-room according to her own ideas. I had the greatest difficulty to get rid of her. She said that Austin had asked her to make her home with us."

"No wonder you called for a book on insanity!"

"Oh, that's not half! I invited some people in to play bridge, and insisted on having Austin as my partner. We lost just over seven pounds. When they had gone, he put his arm about my shoulders and thanked me warmly. He said that, if we had won, it would have looked like a put-up job, and he would never have been able to hold up his head in Richmond again."

"You went the wrong way to work."

"Thank you! I can see that for myself now."

"Wait a minute! I think we've tumbled on the solution of the problem. That speech of his about never being able to hold up his head in Richmond again has given me an idea. We've found the weak link in the chain, the joint in his harness!"

Celia leaned forward. "What is it?" she whispered excitedly.

"His personal pride. Don't you see that all the things you've been doing have never touched his personal pride. You've made him uncomfortable by being late for dinner, you've destroyed his strawberry-bed, you've had your aunt to stay with you, you've lost his money at cards. But all those things are easy to bear when a man is out for martyrdom. What you want to do is to make him look ridiculous. I don't think he'll be able to hold out against that."

"Splendid! You don't know how grateful I am to you! But how can we make him look ridiculous? Tell me—oh, tell me!"

And so I told her.

III.

My friend the printer—it would never have done, as you will see presently, to give the work to a local printer—promised to complete his share of the plot by the following Thursday morning, first post. I cancelled an engagement for Thursday evening, therefore, and stayed at home to be called upon by Austin. He rang the bell at twenty minutes past six precisely.

He was not excited, or moody, or bad-tempered. He looked older than usual, and was evidently trying to conceal a certain agitation beneath an air of worldly resignation. I felt very sorry for him, but on this occasion Celia had been the first to enlist my sympathies. Between the two of them, my poor heart has a hard time of it.

"Scarcely expected to find you at home on a fine evening like this," said Austin.

"It's quite an accident."

"Expecting anyone?"

"Not now."

As he sat down, a folded paper, brilliant scarlet in colour, peeped from an inner pocket. Noting the direction of my eyes, he quickly tucked it out of sight.

"Do you get to town much these days?" he asked presently.

My overworked heart jumped. Had he followed me to the printer's? Did he know?

"Not very much. Why?"

"I was only wondering." (Slight pause.) "You haven't by any chance seen any of these classical dancers they're making such a fuss about?"

"Yes. Have you?"

"No, but I've seen photographs of them."

"And you've read their views on marriage?"

"That's another matter altogether. I wish you could sometimes stick to the point under discussion."

"My dear Austin, you haven't told me yet what the point is."

"I beg your pardon. I thought I had. With regard to these dances, are they—er—strictly correct?"

"I'm sure I don't know. I never lived in ancient Greece."

"Oh, I didn't mean correct from that point of view. Would they—could they be given by ordinary people in an ordinary room?"

"Well, they could, of course, but I doubt whether ordinary people would care to appear before their friends quite like that. The ancient Greek dancers, you know, wore very few clothes."

"Exactly. Now, what would you say if I told you that a certain lady—a young lady—living in this district was about to appear in classical dances before a public audience?"

"I should say, who in the world is it?"

"Yes, and you would laugh at the idea, wouldn't you? You are laughing at this moment." A dark flush spread over his young face.

"I really don't see why you should worry yourself about the matter. The young woman's parents and guardians are the right people to worry, or, if she happens to have

one, her husband. On second thoughts, though, she wouldn't be doing anything so silly if she had a husband. Mere respect for his feelings, if nothing else, would restrain her gambols."

"Some women," said Austin bitterly, "have no respect for their husbands' feelings."

"I'm afraid that's true, but it's always open to the husband to exert his authority. For that reason alone, therefore, I feel quite sure that the young person is not married."

"You're wrong—she is married."

"Then her husband must be a feeble nincompoop."

Austin rose. "I," he said dramatically, "am the husband!"

"*You?*" I gasped. "My dear boy, you're joking! D'you expect me to believe that Celia——"

"Read that!" He flashed the scarlet paper from his pocket and thrust it into my hands. I unfolded it with trembling fingers. This is what I read:—

TOWN HALL,
RICHMOND-ON-THAMES.
On Thursday, Sept. 29, at 8 p.m.
MRS. AUSTIN GRAIN,
of "Ivydene," Hill Terrace, Richmond,
will appear in a series of
CLASSICAL DANCES
as now being given with enormous success
in the leading London music-halls.
THE PROCEEDS WILL BE DEVOTED TO CHARITY.

My friend the printer had done his work well. It was a very effective bill. I read it through twice with considerable pride.

"D'you mean to tell me," I said at last, "that Celia has done this without consulting you?"

"Absolutely. I knew nothing whatever about it until this morning. The thing came by post. It was addressed by mistake to 'Mr. Grain.' Fortunately, I was down first. I put it into my pocket without saying anything to her about it; I couldn't trust myself. All day long it has haunted me. I came straight here from the station. Now, what do you advise me to do?"

"Put a stop to the whole business, of course."

"Suppose it has gone too far? These bills may be all over Richmond to-morrow! Think of my position in the matter! Think of what people will think!"

"The bills won't be posted until Celia has passed the proof. Your course is quite clear. You must simply forbid her to do anything of the sort."

"And if she refuses to obey me—what then?"

"Nonsense! She'll obey you right enough if she sees you mean it."

"I'm not so sure. Her attitude towards me lately has been strangely indifferent. She has done some remarkable things. Nothing so bad as this, though. This is awful!"

"What was it you were telling me about some scheme of silent trust? D'you think that has anything to do with her peculiar conduct?"

"No. She must appreciate my leniency."

"Or take advantage of it."

"You don't understand her."

"Do you?"

"Yes—at any rate, I did once."

"That was before you read that rotten article and tried to live up to it. If you take my advice, you'll go straight home and confront her with this bill. Begin by asking her to abandon the scheme. If she refuses, insist. If she still refuses, pull the house to pieces, beat her, do anything to assert your authority as her husband."

"On one condition," said Austin.

"What is it?"

"That you'll come with me."

IV.

WE took Celia quite by surprise. She was wearing her latest and most delightful evening-gown. She was seated on a couch, her back to the light, idly cutting the pages of a slim volume of poems.

Austin went straight to the point. It is possible that he dared not do otherwise. Delays are dangerous when you have to take a firm line with somebody you love very much.

"Be so good," he said, handing her the scarlet paper, "as to tell me whether you authorised this announcement."

Celia unfolded the paper and read it through with care. Then very gravely she raised her eyes to his.

"Where did you get it?" she asked.

"That has nothing to do with the matter."

"Pardon me, it has a good deal to do with the matter."

"It came by the first post this morning."

"Do you think it honourable to open my letters?"

"It was addressed to me."

"You're sure of that?"

"Quite sure. That point having been cleared up, I shall be obliged if you will kindly answer my question."

"Yes."

"Yes, what?"

"Just yes."

"Then I must trouble you for your explanation."

"I don't see that it needs very much explanation."

"Oblige me by not quibbling. Why did you not tell me before giving your consent to this preposterous nonsense?"

"Would it have interested you?"

"I imagine that most men would be interested to learn that their wives intended to disgrace them on a public platform?"

"You're taking a good deal for granted, aren't you?"

"I am taking nothing for granted. Please don't pretend to misunderstand me. Where did you get this idea? Was it your own, or did it originate with one of your foolish friends?"

I held my breath.

"It originated," said Celia, "with one of my friends."

"Indeed! A man friend, perhaps?"

"As a matter of fact, it was a man friend.

"Will you kindly give me his name?"

Celia busied herself with the little book of poems. I knew why.

"Perhaps I will," she replied, "and perhaps I won't."

"And if I demand the name?"

"You will waste your breath—unless I choose to give it you."



"'Is this true?' he hissed."

"I do demand it."

"I'm afraid you're wasting your breath."

"You don't choose to give it me?"

"Not at this moment."

"Very good. I shall employ other means of finding it out. I presume the printers will know it."

"The question is," observed Celia sweetly, "do you know the printers?"

"They're easily discovered." He snatched up the bill, but my friend, of course, had obliged me by omitting his imprint. Celia laughed.

"This is a more sinister business than I

thought," said Austin. "I shall not rest until I have probed it to the core. In the meantime I absolutely forbid you to carry out this programme or even to return this proof." (He was beginning to raise his voice, so I closed the door.) "In the presence of our friend here I ask you to give me your solemn promise to abandon the whole scheme."

"And if I refuse?"

"Then I shall exert my just authority as your husband."

"In what way?"

"In a way that will probably astonish you."

"I don't quite see what you can do. It wouldn't be legal, would it, to lock me up?"

"I don't know, and I don't care. I will go to any length, legal or illegal, in order to prevent you making a fool of yourself and of me."

"What fun! Why don't you begin?"

"I will begin!"

There were two handsome vases on the mantelpiece, one at each end. They were rather costly vases. I happened to know precisely what they had cost, having given them to Celia myself as a wedding-present. Austin stepped up to the one nearer to him and knocked it into the fender. It was smashed to atoms.

The determination of the thing frightened Celia. She rose to her feet. "How dare you?" she cried. "That was mine!"

"I'll smash the other in a minute!" retorted Austin, beginning to enjoy himself. "I'll smash the clock as well! I'll smash everything in the house!"

"I don't see what good that would do."

"Nor do I, and I don't care!" He advanced on the second vase.

"Why don't you stop him?" called Celia to me.

I shook my head. "I never interfere between husband and wife," I said, thinking that she was still playing the game. Unfortunately, so far as she was concerned, the game was up. A woman can bear almost anything but the destruction of her property.

"Oh, yes, you do!" she retorted. "You're always doing it! There's nothing you love better! If it hadn't been for you, this would never have happened at all!"

"What's that?" inquired Austin with a sudden change of manner.

Celia threw herself on to the sofa quite promptly, and just as promptly burst into tears. Austin strode across the room and thrust his nose within an inch of mine.

"Is this true?" he hissed. (He really did hiss. *You* can hiss that particular sentence if you try.)

I laid my hand on his shoulder, but he shook me off. Clearly the paternal attitude would not work.

"I did it all for the best," I said finely.

"Then you did do it, did you? You put her up to this dodge, did you? And yet you pretended to me that it was all a surprise to you! Well, I hope you're satisfied with the result of your schemes! Look at my poor little wife in tears on the sofa! Is that what you call playing the part of a friend? Of all the sickening——"

I, too, can shout when I like. I shouted now.

"Very well! I have no wish to concern myself with your troubles! I get nothing but abuse for my pains! I've had enough of it! I like you both, and I wish you well, but I'll thank you to leave me out of it when the next bit of trouble comes along. I've troubles enough of my own, although you never seem to realise it. Good evening to both of you, and, if you wish it, good-bye!"

I turned to leave the room. What happened next I cannot describe very precisely. I was conscious of a rushing noise, the swish-swish of a silk petticoat, a soft arm round my neck, and a big kiss on the cheek.

"We shall never make it up if you go," whispered Celia.

What could a man do? Anyhow, I did it.

WINTER ACONITES.

QUAINT winter aconites, you're surely pretty maidens
In old-world gowns of satin and ruffled China *crêpe;*
You're stirring very early, when all the world seems sleeping,
Each wrapp'd against rough weather in a little warm green cape.

Dear little aconites, you smile your gay "Good morrow."
You sweep your pretty curtseys as the wind drifts down the way,
And I know you've come to tell me that Spring's peeping round the corner,
And he longs, like me, to kiss you in your golden gowns to-day.

AUGUSTA HANCOCK.

STORMBOUND.

By H. B. MARRIOTT WATSON.

LITTLE GIBSON kicked the logs in the big open fireplace into a blaze. The devouring flames leapt at his feet and roared up the chimney.

"Aye," he said, turning slowly and facing his wife, a comfortable, capable-looking woman of forty —"aye, this'll be a regular trap for 'em, I reckon."

He was a slow-moving, odd little man, dark of face, with a tendency to giggle, and a curious way of maundering off into silence and unintelligibility. This was, one supposed, probably because he was accustomed to lose sight of his own meaning, or, at least, to gather doubts about his ability to English his meaning. The fire roared and spread warmth about an old-fashioned room. There was a big oak table in the centre, spread with linen for a meal; there were old Windsor chairs ranged on each side of it. On the mantel, high above the ruddy fireplace, copper preserving pans flashed back the firelight, and pestles and mortars, the latter also of copper, winked and gleamed till the chamber was full of sparkling lightning. Gibson went to the window and looked out, pressing his nose against the pane.

"Aye, it's coming down, and no mistake," he remarked. "There'll be snow lying on the fells five feet deep by morning. You'll have the dinner smart, Sally? I'd like to make a good impression on him. These foreigners bring trade."

"Oh, it's not many finds their way up these parts," said Mrs. Gibson. "But don't fidget yourself about me. Anyway, he's bound to be here for a day or so, by the looks of it."

There was a noise without as of a big door opening with a groan, and Gibson turned.

"More of 'em," he said, and chuckled.

"Pish—it's only carters!" said his wife. Gibson went out into the dimly lit passage, where he met the full draught of the snow-laden air. Boots were being kicked heavily on the stone-flagged floor, and rude voices exchanged remarks.

"That you, Jack Allister?" asked the innkeeper.

"Aye. This is a braw night to get to Allen's, eh?"

"You're snowed in, man," chuckled the host, "and so's others. In with you, there. I have a brew that'll comfort you."

He indicated the door of the taproom, which, flung open, disclosed another roaring fire. The men filed in, drinking in the sense of comfort and cosiness with appreciation. Allister lingered behind.

"The waggons are drawn up," he said, "but Tom's got the horses out, and is stabling them."

"Ye're bound for to-day," chuckled little Gibson.

"Aye," said the carter. "It's the worst fall we've had since '81. I mind that well."

He passed into the taproom, and Gibson opened a door on the other side of the passage. In a chair before the fire sat a man of five-and-thirty, large of limb, somewhat lean, with strong plain features and a pleasant look.

"Well, landlord," said he, with an intonation which had caused him to be set down as "foreign," "this looks as if it was going to last."

The daylight was fading through the livid sky, out of which streamed the snow faster and ever faster.

"Yes, sir, it's going to be wild," said the innkeeper.

The stranger stretched his limbs. "I was expecting a friend to join me from Liverpool," he said, "but I guess that's out of the question now. Tell me, is it far from here to Dunsmere?"

"Squire Thornthwaite's?" asked the innkeeper, pondering. "Well, sir, it would be a matter of seven or eight miles by the upper road, and ten by the lower. The upper road makes across the fells."

"The fells?" said the stranger, musing. "That, I believe, signifies not a fall, but a rise, doesn't it? What with your fells and your downs, you're pretty puzzling."

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His smile rendered his criticism quite amiable.

"If you were thinking of going on to Dunsmere, it wouldn't be possible this weather, sir," put in little Gibson.

"No," said the other, warming his hands, "I hadn't thought of it. I was only inquisitive. I come of an inquiring nation, you see."

"American?" ventured little Gibson.

The stranger nodded, looking thoughtfully at the fire.

"Say," he said presently, "if my friend should have started, he could get through from the station here, I suppose?"

"Well, sir"—Gibson frowned over this—"if he'd a-started early this afternoon, he might, but not now."

There was a jingling noise, smart and merry, on the cold air without. The stranger rose. "I guess this is he," he said, and went out into the passage with his host. The outer door opened once more, and once more let in the wild weather. In the fading light the stranger could perceive a big sleigh before the door, from which had alighted a man and a woman heavily clad in furs. At the horses' heads was another man giving them attention.

"Gibson!" called a man's quick, imperious voice from the doorstep. "Is that you, Gibson? Do you think we can manage the lower road? The fells are impossible by now."

The speaker entered as he spoke, preceded by the woman, who was turning back the collar of her furs and scattering the snow from her wraps.

Little Gibson shook his head. "Lower road!" He rolled it over in his stumbling way. "Don't think I should try it, sir. The lower road will be feet deep, and there's the drifts by Raven Hollows, and it'll be dark in half an hour."

"No, father, it's quite impossible, I'm sure," said the girl, as she had now revealed herself to be, flushed from the cold air, bright of eye, and vivid of expression. The stranger stood in the passage looking at her.

"Will you come in, Mr. Thornthwaite, sir?" said Mrs. Gibson, coming forward and taking possession like a good hostess. "There's fires everywhere. I'm sure the young lady must be frozen."

"Wait, father—there's Rixley," said the girl.

"Oh, Gibson, let someone help Rixley with the horses, will you?" said Thornthwaite, with some impatience, as he turned away after Mrs. Gibson. "Come, Damaris, for goodness' sake, let's get into the warmth!"

The two vanished after the landlady, leaving the stranger in the doorway of his little room. He was staring in the direction in which they had disappeared.

Thornthwaite drew off his gloves irritably. "Then it looks like having to stay with you, Gibson," he said. "An infernal nuisance we didn't get off by the earlier train!"

"It wasn't my fault, father," said Damaris gaily; "my shopping was well over."

"No, it was Turton; but we had most important things to discuss," he said rather peevishly.

The Squire's brows corrugated as he stared at the fire, obviously under the press of unpleasant recollections.

"I don't know that I much mind spending Christmas here," said his daughter, looking about the room. "It's very romantic to be snowed up. Everything is as clean as clean," she remarked appreciatively. And then, as if on a sudden thought: "Oh, Alan will be waiting at Dunsmere to-morrow!" she exclaimed.

Thornthwaite came out of his meditations. "He won't get there if it goes on like this," he said drily.

His daughter's face displayed a doubt, but she said nothing.

"I suppose Gibson can give us something to eat," he went on, with a glance at the table. "I got practically no luncheon."

"I'll see Mrs. Gibson," said Damaris, rising. She seized the chance of making a toilet, and went out. The flagged passage was dimly lit, and seemed wide and cold, as though part of the wild night; and she went in search of the hostess towards the bar. The voices of the stormbound carters issued noisily from the taproom, and the sound of the beer-pulls came to her.

"Mrs. Gibson!" she called, and cautiously turned the handle of a door on the right. A man rose from the chair in which he had been sitting, and took the cigar from his mouth.

"Oh, I beg your pardon!" exclaimed the girl.

"Pray don't think of it," said the stranger, in a rich American accent: "Can I help you?"

"I was looking for Mrs. Gibson," said Damaris. "The fact is, I wanted to know if she was prepared to feed us."

She laughed pleasantly and without any embarrassment.

"I have been hanging upon that hope ever since I arrived," he told her gravely.

Her eyes took him in—a big and courteous person, with a grave, determined, kindly face.

"You were caught?" she inquired.

He nodded. "I didn't contemplate spending Christmas just here, but I don't know that I mind that much."

"It might be rather jolly," said the girl, "if only Mrs. Gibson has supplies. I must find out."

She nodded, smiling, and left him, and the stranger stood a while thoughtfully ere he replaced his cigar between his teeth.

Damaris tripped along the passage towards the back of the house. She had had an idea that Mr. Gibson was wont to use that little room as his office, which was the case. He had, however, surrendered it temporarily to the American stranger. Mrs. Gibson was captured on the outskirts of the kitchen, and interrogated satisfactorily. She had been a cook in a good family, and knew her customers.

"You needn't fear, miss; we'll make you comfortable, even if we can't give you all that Dunsmere could offer."

Reassured, Damaris sought her room, and repaired the ravages of the weather on her toilet. When she got downstairs again, she found Gibson setting extra wine-glasses on the table.

"I ought to have told you, sir," he said, addressing Thornthwaite. "I hope you won't mind. There's another guest—a gentleman from abroad, sir, or somewhere."

"Another?" Thornthwaite came out of his reflections to listen. "Oh, it can't be helped, Gibson. We mustn't interfere with your ways. We're interlopers, you know."

"I shouldn't call you that, sir," said Gibson with a chuckle. "I've looked out some of the old port, sir," he went on, as he set the table.

"Ah!" The Squire looked attention. "I believe I've tasted that port, Gibson. Didn't I——"

"Yes, sir, last Easter, sir."

"I remember it. That's good news. Well, we'll be as comfortable as we can, Gibson. Warm within and warm without, eh?"

"Yes, sir. I thought, maybe, you'd like a glass of——"

Gibson's voice fell away into nothing, but on his tray he had a sherry glass. The Squire's eyes sparkled.

"Eh, what? Yes, not a bad idea. If your sherry is as good as your port was, Gibson——"

He took the glass, sipped it critically, and nodded.

"That's it—a trifle on the full side, but right as rain for weather like this. Gibson, here's to you and the house!"

"Thank'ee, sir!" The little innkeeper beamed at the success of his surprise.

Mrs. Gibson, forewarned in time, had put her best foot forward; she had prepared a feast for Christmas Eve only second in consideration to that for Christmas itself. There was roast turkey and there was a real Yorkshire ham, there was tongue, there was Christmas pudding, there were mince-pies, jellies, sweetmeats, and what not.

The Squire, passing it in approval, sampled the wine, a dry champagne from "The Talbot's" cellars.

"Very good, Gibson; you have done excellently. Mrs. Gibson has surpassed herself," he proclaimed with the air of one accustomed to sit in judgment.

The American had made his entry just before the turkey, and bowed in a stately manner to his fellow-guests.

"We are fellow-prisoners," he observed pleasantly, "but prison fare seems generous."

Squire Thornthwaite started at the voice, and frowned. "You are an American, sir?" he said rather curtly.

"I have that privilege," said the stranger drily.

The Squire opened his mouth as if to say something, then shut it sharply, and frowned more deeply. Then he said—

"I haven't much acquaintance with your countrymen, though I've had some correspondence with——" He glanced at the other. "Isn't there a place called Utica in your country?"

"I believe — there is," answered the American very deliberately, as if he had been striving to recall the name.

The Squire grunted as if the name displeased him, and drew his chair to the table.

"Hey, Gibson," he called, "I think you'd better carve this; I'm not equal to——"

"Will you allow me?" asked the American; and, rising, as if he took the assent for granted in his resolute way, he came round the table. After a momentary hesitation, the Squire yielded his place, and took the stranger's, farther from the fire.

"Yes, I don't like the fire on my back," he muttered.

Damaris was thus left between the two men, but rather nearer to the stranger. He

was not talkative, and had a quiet way with him, but, for all that, he was forceful. He attended to her wants without seeming to do so, as if by an instinct, and she liked his friendly eyes. The wine and the honest fare warmed the Squire, as has been suggested. and he relaxed his mood. He became slightly garruious, and his rather narrow egotism showed in his talk.

"You, sir, have what you call thanks-givings," he said to the American, in a tone that might have implied that he would not think of calling things by such outlandish names.

"Yes," assented the stranger. "We eat our turkeys then, mostly, but we save a few for Christmas."

His smile was easy, humorous, but hardly satirical.

"Ah, yes," said the Squire comfortably, "I like sticking to the old customs. I dare say you got that from us."

"Why, father, the turkey came from America!" said Damaris gaily.

The American's eyes sparkled appreciation at this, though he had made no comment himself.

The Squire was slightly disconcerted. "Well, it doesn't matter where it came from," he said impatiently. "The principle's the thing. We don't change easily, sir; we like to keep up the practices of our fore-fathers. My ancestors have kept Christmas at Dunsmere in the same way for over three hundred years, and, please God, I'll keep it so to the end—and mine after me."

His eyes, with a certain glow in them which the stranger respected, fell upon his daughter. No one reminded him that this Christmas, at least, would not so be kept. The stranger also gazed at Damaris, seemingly in a little abstraction. Then, as if collecting himself, he lifted his glass.

"I drink to your health and a long life, sir," he said courteously.

The Squire thanked him and resumed. "Yes, our roots go deep, sir, in this country. We are, in the best sense of the word, 'of the soil.' You would hardly understand my meaning out your way."

"Perhaps not, sir," the American said softly.

"I don't know that you'd altogether appreciate it if you did," said the Squire further.

The other glanced about the old room, with its great fireplace and its blackened beams, and he smiled. "There are some old things and ways I like," he said.

"Ah, yes, I understand your countrymen are great on antiquities," said Thornthwaite in a patronising tone. "It's very interesting and rather touching. Quite a number go to Stratford-on-Avon, and so on. But to realise what it means really, you have to be born here—born here, sir."

"I have no doubt," assented the American, replenishing Damaris's glass unobtrusively.

Thornthwaite rang the bell. "Gibson, let us have some of that port of yours, eh? You'll join me?" His eyes invited the American genially.

"With pleasure," said the latter. "Old port is also one of the old things I can admire."

"Ah, England's the place to get—— Steady, Gibson! Basket, man—a basket! Don't break that wine, if it's what I had at Easter!"

Little Gibson apologised, and retired to fetch a basket, into which the bottle was slanted carefully.

"Now, sir." The Squire beamed his anticipation as the American's glass was filled. "Half a glass for you, Damaris. Good wine is thrown away on women, sir. Now!"

They raised their glasses, and the Squire waited for the sign of approval, as did Gibson, half-way to the door.

"Delicious!" said the American.

"You won't get wine like that in America, sir," ventured the Squire heartily.

The other agreed, and offered the plate of nuts to Damaris. Little Gibson bustled in again.

"Here's some crackers, if Miss Damaris would like——" he began shyly.

Miss Damaris cried out in pleasure. "Oh, how charming! Really, Gibson, it is delightful of you! I believe you arranged this snowstorm, and expected us. Father, a cracker with you!"

The Squire beamed, and held out his plump white hand. Bang! A little bead necklace fell with a rattle upon Damaris's plate. She took it up and put it about her slender throat, where it gleamed in the light of the candles. The firelight played on her hair, burnishing its amber tints.

Crackers cracked, and the Squire's head was crowned by his laughing daughter with a ridiculous cap. Another one adorned the thicker hair of the American. Anyone looking in upon this party would have thought that the members were lifelong friends, and would have been astounded to learn that two of them did not know the name of the third. Presently little Gibson,

hovering in the offing, suggested that he should brew a bowl of punch. This idea was hailed cordially by Thornthwaite. The American said nothing, and his silence seemed to Damaris to indicate that he would rather stop at the port. But the bowl was brewed "after a famous recipe, sir," said the Squire, now thoroughly relaxed. The ridiculous cap had slipped down over one ear, but he was unconscious of that. He held the floor garrulously on behalf of Old England.

"Some of your countrymen, Mr. ——" He hesitated, inviting cordially the name.

"Burdett," said the American, after a perceptible pause.

"Mr. Burdett, some of your countrymen," the Squire continued, "are not quite to my liking. Ah, I have had trouble with some of them! Not that I count it against Americans; that would be obviously unfair —inequitable. But the fact is, one of your countrymen has succeeded in giving me a good deal of trouble."

It was after the second glass of punch, which is why we make a feeble claim for indulgence for the Squire. Damaris turned in her chair and averted her face. She left the table and took her chair to the fire. The Squire rambled on.

"Gibson," he proclaimed, as the little innkeeper appeared to clear the table, "you have surpassed yourself. The punch is excellent. Did you use China or Indian tea?"

When the cloth was cleared, cigars were lit, after the American had obtained permission from Damaris, and the punch was left on the table, quite near the Squire. He pulled aside the curtains and looked out upon a livid welter.

"Who was it said 'I can take mine ease at mine inn,' Damaris?" he asked, dropping them. "Shakespeare, wasn't it? He belongs to you as well as to us, Mr. Burdett," he allowed graciously, as he filled his glass again. The other man had civilly declined, but the Squire's inspection of the storm without seemed to demand another glass. He finished his cigar, leaned back in his big chair, and presently was fast asleep.

The American softly shifted his chair to the opposite side of the big fireplace. The storm spattered down the chimney, and the fire sizzled.

"It is comfortable, isn't it?" he said in a low tone.

Her voice was even lower, though the rising snores of her father rendered the precaution unnecessary.

"I want you not to—to excuse—to forget what my father said about—Americans," she said rapidly. "He doesn't mean it; but he's been much put out."

"What was it he said?" he asked, smiling, to show his utter obedience.

"You see," said Damaris, unheeding, "we have lived hundreds of years at Dunsmere, and now there is a claimant."

"A claimant?" he repeated.

"Yes, someone in America. My father's solicitors have been dealing with the matter. He claims to be descended from an older branch, which emigrated to America eighty years ago. You see, there were three brothers, and the eldest died, and then his son died, and the middle brother had gone to America, they say. And no news was ever heard of him, and so the youngest brother's son came into the property. That's how father inherited it. But this—this American claims to be descended from the second son. And the property's entailed, and would go to him if it was true. But it isn't, of course; he's a pretender who calls himself Thornthwaite. But it's given father a lot of trouble; it's worried him terribly. It would, wouldn't it?"

Mr. Burdett agreed, looking into the heart of the red embers of the fire. "Yes," he said simply.

His gaze came from the fire and centred on her as she studied the embers. He admired the girls of his native land—he was their zealous partisan—but he had never gone beyond admiration. His life had not brought him into familiar contact with women. It had been a strenuous and a solitary life among facts and figures. And here he was at close quarters with a girl who was very feminine, yet did not obtrude her femininity, who was frank and easy without detriment to her reserve. In that silence Damaris's mind had roamed in America.

"Your things seem so big," she said contemplatively. "Whether they are evil or good, they are on a large scale to us. I think they frighten us."

"Well," he replied, "after all, a big thing is just a number of small things."

"No, I don't think so. It hasn't that effect—at least, not on me."

"A million dollars is just a million dollars," he said, smiling.

"Well, we make it a million dollars," she replied, smiling also.

"When I've had to figure up things, I don't know," he said reflectively, "that I



"They found the American lying unconscious."

have taken into account anything save the addition."

"Ah!" She studied him with interest. "A life where things are done on a big scale must be interesting."

"It's the little things," he insisted.

"No, I'm a megalomaniac by temperament," she declared, laughing; and then she was silent, while the man also fell into a reverie. He dreamed. How many Englishmen came across the Atlantic to fetch their brides? The balance was in sad need of redressing. He could claim this girl with the vivid face and thoughtful eyes opposite him as a relation. She was indeed a distant cousin. The idea held a thrill in it . . . "Cousin Damaris," he might even claim to say. It was a pretty, demure name, and seemed to fit her. . . He dreamed on. In his pocket-book was a package of correspondence, solicitors' letters, telegrams, cable messages in cipher. These had brought him across the estranging seas, and for what? Was it for this merely—that Cousin Damaris should lose her home, the home of her fathers, which had been theirs for three hundred years? Ah, but it had been his father's also. A Thornthwaite would give place to a Thornthwaite; but Damaris—— Involuntarily he shot a glance at the sleeping Squire. It mattered little if that arrogant and narrow mind—— Ah, but Damaris—and it was Damaris's father . . . . He dreamed, and in the rich golden heart of the fire he saw visions dim, thrilling, glimpses of a future—of such a future, maybe, in which Damaris should not lose her home and the home of her fathers.

The Squire's head lolled on his shoulder, and he woke with a snort. The dreams vanished . . . Damaris rose.

"It's time for bed," she said, and looked sleepy.

Outside the storm still raged; within was light and warmth and presently peace.

At ten o'clock next morning, when the sky was clearing, and the breakfast of the prisoners was just over, a sleigh dashed up to the door of "The Talbot." It was driven by a tall and vigorous young man with an energetic manner and a genial, authoritative voice. The American noted the arrival from the window of the dining-room, and heard the door of the room open and shut in quick succession. Next moment he had a vision of Damaris bareheaded before the inn door, and smiling in welcome of the new arrival. He lingered at the window, with the masses of the shining white hills before him, and was presently aware that Damaris had returned. The man was with her.

"Here's Alan, father," she said with some excitement. The tall, fair young man was smiling.

"Come over to fetch you, sir," he said. "I guessed you'd got stuck here."

"Are the roads all right?" asked the Squire, shaking hands.

"Yes, I came along finely." His eyes took in the American with incurious indifference; and, thinking to leave a family party alone, the American, with native courtesy, moved to the door. He was, however, stopped ere he reached it.

"Oh, Alan, this gentleman has helped us over our imprisonment so kindly! Mr. Burdett—Mr. Earle."

The American acknowledged the introduction with his quiet formalism, and after a few exchanges, carried out his intention of leaving the party to itself. He found Gibson stirring the fire in the little room.

"The Squire'll be gone now," said the innkeeper. "That young Mr. Earle's a caution."

"He seems a very fine fellow," said the American slowly.

"He's that, sir; but, Jove, he's a daredevil for risks! It's to be hoped he won't break his neck before he marries Miss Damaris. Not that it's much of a match on her side, for the Earles are poor as church mice."

"Ah!" said the American, staring at the fire. And then, lifting his head after a minute's silence, he continued in another voice: "You think it's clearing, then, landlord, and fit weather for travelling? I'm rather anxious to get on if it can be managed."

Little Gibson looked doubtful. "I dunno that I could say," he said, and looked out. "There's more snow in the sky, likely."

"Oh, I think it can be managed," said the American in his decisive way. "Will you see about a sleigh?"

His departure, bruited in the house, came to the ears of Damaris and so to Earle's.

"Look here, sir," said the latter, "why not take my sleigh, and you can have Rixley? He knows the road to Elwood Station. I'll take you back by the upper road, Damaris."

"The upper road?" she demurred.

"Yes, silly! It's much shorter, and it will be ripping!"

The American, anxious to get away while the weather held, had closed with Earle's offer with thanks, and an hour later stood

ready to depart. Alan Earle and the Squire were discussing a hunting question over a glass of port. Damaris emerged from the inn door, and looked at Burdett, as he called himself, with frank friendliness. They talked of the weather, of the fells, of the wonderful scenery that was now smothered in the white folds of the snow, and of the past Christmas Eve.

"I thank you for cheering a stranger's way in a strange land," he said, putting out his hand in farewell.

"No, no, not a strange land, and not a stranger," protested Damaris.

"You are right," he said softly and slowly —"neither a strange land nor a stranger. Good-bye!"

"*Auf wiedersehen!*" she corrected, and waved her hand as Rixley shook the reins, and the sleigh began to move.

An hour later Alan Earle, with the ribbons in his hands, and the Squire and his daughter for passengers, pulled out upon the upper road for Dunsmere. The sky was clouded again, and little Gibson shook his head; but Earle laughed, and Damaris, safe in her lover's care, laughed with him. The cold air bit deeply into her cheeks and brightened her colour. She waved a hand to little Gibson.

The storm descended out of a livid heaven ere the sleigh was two miles gone. Earle struggled on in the teeth of it, but had the sense to recognise that he was beaten.

"Awfully sorry," he cried out; "we must go the lower road, after all! I can take this side-track over the fell, and join it below the dale cross-roads."

He turned the team, and the sleigh swung out on the new route silently and swiftly. The sky had fallen blacker. Over the fell they went, and descended into the valley amid a blinding storm.

Alan Earle never hesitated, swerved, or winced. He was of a gallant heart, and he knew his way. If he took risks, he was, at any rate, prepared for them; and just now he had refused to take the greatest risk because of the precious freight he carried. Yet it might have seemed that he was taking hazards to the full even now. All landmarks had been wiped out by the storm. Stone fences lay deep under drifts; the world was one whirling maelstrom of whiteness. Alan Earle kept his eyes to the front, and the feet of the horses beat noiselessly upon the snow field.

"This is Ridge's," he called to the Squire; "we're half-way."

Damaris was muffled in her warm furs, and was content, trusting all in all to Alan Earle. He swept along the trackless waste with an unerring instinct, yet upon each side now were slopes of soft snow, a plunge into which might be fatal.

"Hollier's barn!" he cried encouragingly, indicating a formless mass that rose on a height.

The horses swept on gallantly. Half a mile farther, Alan Earle stared tensely before him, and then there was a hand on his shoulder.

"Alan—Alan, it's a man!"

Damaris in her excitement had risen in the sleigh. It was a figure that staggered and fell, and rose and staggered again as if it were drunken.

Alan Earle pulled up the sleigh and stepped out.

"Good Heavens, it's Rixley!" he exclaimed.

"Rixley?" echoed Damaris, and sharply on that: "Where's the sleigh? Where's Mr. Burdett?"

The Squire was the most practical at the moment. He fumbled in his pocket and produced a flask of brandy, by means of which Rixley's control of voice and wits was somewhat recovered. He explained the situation. The sleigh had been caught in the storm, and had gone over into a drift from the high ground. The horses had taken fright and had bolted. Rixley had followed them through the snow as far as he could, but the traces were now long since obliterated, and he had fallen a victim to exhaustion in the bitter cold.

"But Mr. Burdett," cried Damaris—"where is he?"

"The gentleman hurt his ankle, and I left him to run after the horses, miss."

"Good Heavens, in this snow!" ejaculated the Squire.

Damaris cried out in dismay.

"In what direction?" demanded Alan Earle.

Rixley stared at the blind landscape, and then put out a wavering hand.

"By the crag," he said.

"That will be close to the Lomax plantation," said Alan Earle decisively. He knew every yard of the wilderness.

Rixley was tucked into the sleigh, and the horses broke into an amble. Half a mile further, where the cross-road turns off for Elwood, they found the American lying unconscious and half covered by the snow. He had struggled some distance on his injured leg ere he had collapsed. Unconscious he was lifted into the sleigh, and

unconscious he was carried into the hall of Dunsmere, though he had revived under a dose of brandy sufficiently to recognise the girl.

"Damaris!" his lips muttered, and he smiled and closed his eyes again.

Damaris, descending into the hall a little later, after she had seen a room provided for the guest, was amazed at the look upon her father's face. It was livid—as livid as the sky out of which the snow was storming. The fire blazed in the big hall.

"Come here," he said tensely, and grasped his daughter as he withdrew her into his study. "The man's overcoat," he said harshly—"these fell out of it." He held two letters in his hand, one that had been through the post, and the other newly addressed and stamped. "Heavens," he said, as Damaris stared wonderingly, "it's the man, the impostor! This letter is addressed to T. B. Thornthwaite, and the other is to the solicitor who wrote to me. It's the impostor who claims my property!"

In his fury he would have rent the letters in pieces and thrown them in the fire, but his daughter's hand restrained him.

"Don't, father—don't! You mustn't! Give them to me. I don't understand. . . . I can't believe——" She fluttered into silence painfully.

The Squire, who had shut the door, went to his writing-table and opened a drawer. He had grown haggard within the last few minutes after the flaring of his wrath. His hands trembled as he sorted some papers. He had professed to scoff at this claim of an American stranger, and yet—— The papers shook in his fingers. "I am instructed by my client, Mr. Theodore Burdett Thornthwaite——" Burdett! He dashed the papers down and rose, confronting Damaris in his agitation.

"I won't have that man in the house!" he declared. "An impostor and a scoundrel! He must go at once. Give me those letters. Tell Howarth to put the greys in the sleigh."

"Father"—Damaris spoke reproachfully, yet with hardly less agitation than he displayed—"you know that it is impossible. You—— He is ill; he cannot be removed."

"Give me the letters. There are instructions to his solicitors, the scoundrel, the treacherous——"

"No. Father, I beg you to remember," Damaris pleaded, putting her hand with the letters behind her back. "Father, if he is an impostor, it won't hurt us. It will only injure him. He is our guest, remember."

The Squire dropped into a chair. "He says he has all the documents—of the marriage, and—it is a lie!" he almost shouted. "No one can disturb me here. Dunsmere belongs to me!"

It was the first time that this unimaginative man had looked things squarely in the face. Now that he was forced to do so, he did not like the look of them. It had seemed a vague, amorphous affair altogether when the claimant was in America, and letters reached him through solicitors in the usual prolix, malingering way. Now, with the enemy in the midst, it had taken on another colour. The Squire was uneasy, perturbed, blatant. And his daughter, looking at him, wondered.

Had it been so ridiculous a matter as he had protested always? This looked almost like a stricken man who put his hand to his brow and stared at the fire greyly.

"Father, we must do our duty. He is our guest," she whispered.

But the Squire did not seem to hear. The ponderous and unemotional phrases of the solicitor's letter were revolving in his brain.

Damaris went upstairs with the letters in her hand. Her heart was thumping, and she sought her room. The night was settling in with a whirl of the storm, yet within it was warm and bright. She sat by the fire in her room, and recalled how they had sat by the fire in Gibson's only twenty-four hours back. How much seemed to have happened since then!

Damaris rose and went noiselessly along the corridor to the room in which the stranger lay. She entered softly, and stood looking down upon the strong face now in the peace of sleep. Then she moved to the wardrobe and opened a door. She had the letters in her hand, and she inserted them in the pocket of the coat which hung from one of the pegs. The firelight was playing over the room, from the ceiling to the walls, and the American opened his eyes. It flashed on Damaris and the white envelopes in her hand. He made no movement, but fixed his gaze upon her, and then, as she turned, her mission accomplished, he closed his eyes firmly. She slipped from the room. Burdett, as he had called himself, was feeling much better, and he sat up in bed. Then he crept with difficulty out of the sheets and hobbled towards the wardrobe. He examined his pockets, and a small smile illumined his features. He knew that his identity had been discovered.

"I'm sorry," he murmured. "I could wish it had ended otherwise."



"She had the letters in her hand, and she inserted them in the pocket of the coat."

Two hours later Damaris re-entered the room, and found the patient awake.

"I'm so glad," she said in her sweet, cheerful voice. "I was afraid you'd miss your Christmas dinner. Do you know it's nearly time for it?"

After a moment's pause, he answered: "Didn't we have it last night?"

"That, I think, was a dress rehearsal," said Damaris lightly. "The performance is to come. I'm sorry you must take it in such circumstances."

"Thank you!" he said quietly, and watched her while she busied herself about the room.

He was aware that she knew, and he wondered. Nothing in her had changed. She presented the same gracious, girlish face, and smiled as she had smiled in the inn. He fell into deep thought when he was alone.

The Squire's Christmas dinner was somewhat marred by the unpleasant discovery, yet he was not a sensitive man, and under the influence of the fare the cloud of gloom fell from him. The party consisted of Damaris, Alan Earle, and himself, and Alan Earle developed spirits for all. The identity of the stranger did not affect him.

"Deuced awkward!" he thought it and called it, but passed off to other and brighter and more intimate considerations. For this was Christmas Day, and Damaris faced him

across the table. It did not concern his honest heart that the success of the claimant would materially affect the fortune of his future wife. If the Earles could not bring great estates and much money to the holy state of matrimony, they at least were used to bring stout hearts and sincere devotion He laughed and cracked nuts over the wine, and in the presence of that cheerful laugh the Squire's grievance faded.

Damaris had visited the American's room several times during the evening to see that he was receiving proper attention. The muscles of the leg had been badly twisted, but he hoped to be up at least next day.

"I want you, Miss Thornthwaite," said he, when she paid her last visit, "to pour me a glass of wine, if you will be so good."

"Certainly," she said, and did so wondering.

The American took it, and, bowing with grave courtesy, raised it to his lips.

"I drink," he said slowly, "to your great happiness in the hope and belief that nothing will interfere with it."

"I thank you," said Damaris softly, and went out and closed the door.

In the morning the sun shone brightly over a white world, and the landscape was dazzling to the eye, as the light sparkled on a million million tiny crystals. The American's leg was still very stiff and painful, yet he expressed his intention of leaving Dunsmere.

"I can burden you no longer," he told Damaris, repeating the words despite her protest. He begged the loan of a sleigh to take him to Elwood Station, which, seeing that he was resolved, she assured him would be ready. A little later he limped downstairs, and at the door of the hall Damaris met him.

"I'm sorry," she said awkwardly, "my father had some business which took him away. He asked me to pay his compliments to you."

"I thank him," said the American gravely, "and I take this opportunity also to thank Mr. Thornthwaite and yourself for your kind hospitality to a belated stranger——" He paused, and then put out a hand, which she took. "It seems we say 'Good-bye' again," he said. "It was *auf wiedersehen* before—you were right—but now it's good-bye. I like to think of that old word's meaning—'God be with you.'"

"Perhaps it is still *auf wiedersehen*," suggested Damaris with some embarrassment.

He shook his head, "No," he said decidedly, "it is 'God be with you.'"

He turned and mounted the sleigh, which Alan Earle had offered to drive. A curve in the carriage-way swept him forthwith out of sight. Alan Earle, cheerful soul, chatted pleasantly on indifferent subjects throughout the drive.

"There's where you had your spill," he said at the cross-roads, pointing with his whip.

"Yes," said the other quietly. "I do not forget what I owe you."

At the station he said good-bye. "You are a very fortunate man, Mr. Earle," he said with meaning. "I shall hope that you and yours will be always happy."

"Decent chap!" was what Alan Earle reflected, as he turned away with a healthy commonplace rejoinder.

The Squire was much astounded by the receipt of a letter three days later from his solicitor. Then his face beamed; finally it settled into a complacent expression of triumphant virtue.

"Damaris, the case is withdrawn," he told his daughter eagerly. "The impostor has given in."

"Father!" she cried in surprise.

He handed her the letter, which was couched in more or less formal terms.

"So there won't be any more trouble, and Dunsmere's mine, and yours after me," said the Squire, with a sigh of relief. Damaris was staring at the letter which conveyed this astonishing news. "Not that there was any doubt," continued the Squire, resuming his complacent confidence, "though it might have put me to no end of bother and expense. But the fellow evidently saw he had no chance."

"No," said Damaris, suddenly lifting her eyes—"no, father, somehow I don't think it was that."

THE CHOICE.

By AUSTIN PHILIPS.

THE man who takes fortune at the flood is commonplace enough. The world bristles with him. He is almost as frequent as its failures. It is another thing to see the flood-gates faintly ajar, to push them wide, to shoot the rapids in a cockle-shell of your own contrivance, and then disdain the prize. That is what Blakiston did—Blakiston, of the Belboro Branch of Boyd's Unlimited Bank.

He was cashier. He had been cashier for just under eleven years. For precisely that time he had carried incompetent managers on his highly efficient back. One of them had drunk himself to death, another had got promotion on account of the increased business which Blakiston had built up, and the third was a neurotic, who spent half his working hours in bed. All of which had helped Blakiston no whit. You see, he had neither married a director's daughter nor toadied to the inspecting staff. He had not even been the jackal of a high official in town. He was just the son of a poor parson without influence of any sort at all.

But he was a man who saw plain, and who knew the meaning of *j'y suis, j'y reste.* So he set his teeth and bore disappointment bravely, and gave his wife the ultimate farthing which he could spare for housekeeping, as it is the duty of a good sportsman to do. Also, he kept himself in the pink of condition, and looked after his well-worn clothes. Which was wise. A man may keep a stout heart through any disappointment if only he brushes his coat and wears a clean collar and puts his trousers into a press. A good crease down the middle of the leg is the first aid to self-respect.

It was just before noon on a raw March morning, in the eleventh year of his cashiership, that Blakiston beheld the flood-gates faintly ajar. He was sitting in the manager's room. The manager himself was away, recruiting, after a bout of neurasthenia, for the work which he never even pretended to do. Blakiston, as usual, was taking his place. At the moment he was writing a letter to a client on the Riviera who wanted English notes, which Blakiston was to enclose. The notes—four fifties—were actually projecting from an envelope at his left hand. Before he had signed his name, one of the junior clerks came in.

"If you please, sir"—the "sir" slipped out involuntarily, a tribute to Blakiston's prestige—"if you please, Miss Benyon-Blayne would like to see you."

Blakiston finished signing his name, blotted the letter methodically, and looked up.

"Ask her to come in," he said.

The clerk went out. In half a minute he was back.

"Miss Benyon-Blayne!" he announced, holding open the door.

Blakiston rose to his feet. The lady entered. She was a daughter of Sir Reuben Benyon-Blayne, the Salt King, who lived at Harcutt Hall, three miles out of Belboro. He was a man who had begun as a boy on a salt barge, and who would end as a peer of the realm. At present he was only a baronet. The final step was yet to take; but it was, at the most, a mere question of time.

Miss Benyon-Blayne had not, to Blakiston's thinking, an agreeable face. Neither had she a gracious manner. She wore a heavy motor coat, now unbuttoned, and her ungauntletted hands were over-ringed. Round her neck a long gold chain was doubled and twined, while, back-grounded by her muff, suspended from the chain, a jewelled heart-shaped locket was winking at the fire. Masses of fair hair showed under her toque of fur, and her large round eyes were impertinently blue. She sank with somewhat meretricious elegance into the chair which Blakiston held out. She spoke in a high, haughty, throaty voice. Her whole attitude was one of *de haut en bas* condescension.

"My father wants some scrip," she said. "Here's his letter." And she extended it between a scornful finger and thumb.

"Thank you," said Blakiston politely. It is the first duty of a banker to be all things to all mankind, but he felt that he

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should like to slap her—hard. He opened the letter, read it, and faced her again.

"If you'll excuse me for a minute, I'll go and get what your father wants," he explained; "it's in the strong-room." And he jumped up from his chair. Then he caught sight of the envelope with its projecting bank notes. Instinctively he picked it up and threw it into a drawer of his desk, turning the key. Before he had reached the door, Miss Benyon-Blayne called to him over her shoulder.

"I'm in a hurry," she said curtly.



"She had slipped the envelope into her vast muff."

Blakiston made no answer. He hurried off to the strong-room. But it took him fully five minutes to find what he wanted. On the way back he caught up a long cover from the bank counter, put the scrip into it, sealed it down, and wrote the address. Then he hastened back to his room. And though he found his client sitting where he had left her, it seemed to him that, on turning the handle, he had heard the faint scrape-scrape of a chair.

"This is what Sir Reuben requires, I think." He handed her the envelope as he spoke. Miss Benyon-Blayne took it with exaggerated nonchalance and without a word of thanks. Blakiston stared. He observed

that the heat of the room seemed to have made her cheeks a uniform scarlet, and that she was breathing curiously fast. It was on the tip of his tongue to blurt out an apology for the big fire, but the lady gave him no chance. She had slipped the envelope into her vast muff, and was looking arrogantly at the door by which she had come in. Blakiston opened it and bowed her out. "Good morning!" he said as she passed. Miss Benyon-Blayne inclined her head haughtily, as if to a servant, and crossed into the front office, thence into the street. Blakiston shut the door, walked back to his chair, and fell into it rather than sat down.

"That's what I call pretty manners!" he told the blank wall opposite. Then he turned to his work again.

First of all he picked up the letter which he had been writing and read it through. After that he looked round for its envelope. The absence of it mystified him a moment; then he remembered that he had put it into a drawer. With the recollection came a kind of regret. Perhaps it wasn't very courteous of him to have taken the notes off the table and to have put them away under his customer's eyes. But then it made no difference; he hadn't taken the key out of the drawer, so she couldn't have been offended at *that*. It must have been just her native haughtiness and nothing else.

Still rather idly thinking, he turned the key and pulled the drawer open. Carelessly, mechanically, his hand fumbled for the envelope, but unsuccessfully. He looked down and rummaged with care. There was no sign of it. He searched again, still without success. Then, fairly frightened, he took the drawer bodily out and set it on the desk. He went through every scrap of paper in vain; but between two sheets of foolscap, where, doubtless, he had shaken it, he found something else. And he whistled a single long-drawn note.

He swung round on his revolving chair to catch the light, crossed his legs characteristically, and rested his hand, palm upwards, on his knee. For the second time that morning jewels winked in the firelight on a pendant locket, golden and heart-shaped.

Blakiston whistled again, but sat quite still, contemplating the trinket. Presently he turned it over, and saw that there were initials on the back. They were twisted and intertwined into careful illegibility. He could not make them out; but a big magnifying glass that he took from the desk helped him. The initials were "R.E.B.B." And his lips primmed.

He rang the bell. The junior clerk answered it.

"Bring me ledger A—G, please," said Blakiston.

The boy came back with the big book.

"Thank you," said Blakiston quietly. He began to search. In a minute what he wanted was found.

"Ruth Elinor Benyon-Blayne," he read. Then he closed the book with a bang and handed it back to the waiting clerk.

"That settles it," said Blakiston to himself. "And now let's think what is to be done." Then, as a sudden thought caught him, he turned to the drawer again. On its front, just inside, on the soft pitch-pine lining, was an indentation. The magnifying glass came in handy again. It showed up the imprint of a small and hard-pressed ring—such a one as might form a link in a long and slender chain.

Blakiston leaned back in his chair and began to think hard. For a long time he sat motionless. Once he glanced at a card which hung on his right hand—a prospectus of Boyd's Bank, with a list of directors topping it. At the head of them all he read: "Chairman, Sir Reuben Benyon-Blayne, Bart." He smiled faintly and relapsed into thought. It was half an hour before he moved, save to jab the blotting paper with his pencil's point. But then his mind was made up. All ambitious and shut-in men dream in their hearts of a splendid, ever elusive chance that shall help them to win out of circumstance's slough. Such a chance had come to Blakiston now. He was going to make a ladder to success of what a man with less imagination would have called a disaster of the worst and cruellest kind.

Opportunity had taken him off his balance—just that. He was resolved to do something which was against the grain of every tenet that he held. A man does not play games and live hard and self-denyingly and clean without result. These things leave their mark. So Blakiston, for all his impulse, was presently going to find.

He walked to the glass and settled his tie—that action the first earnest of a man's trouble and stress. He patted his hair and pulled at the lapels of his coat, nicely adjusting its set. Then he regarded his own image with peculiar care.

"You are a blackguard and a blackmailer," he observed critically. "You are also in a blind alley and see a way out. Further, you

have a wife and four kiddies. Finally, though the bank does not seem to discern the necessity, a man must live."

Once more he rang the bell.

"I'm going out to see a client," he said. "Kindly get me a cab."

Blakiston spent the drive rehearsing his plan of campaign. It was astonishing how collected he was. He felt positively Napoleonic in his generalship, and had things cut and dried to the final masterly move. As the cab carried him up the long drive to the towered gate-houses of the quadrangle, and on to the terrace before the house, a huge private omnibus passed him. It was crammed with the luggage of departing guests. "That spells baccarat and explains everything," thought Blakiston. "I understand perfectly now." For Miss Benyon-Blayne was reported to have social ambitions, and to be upon the fringe of a certain rapid set.

He was left in the big, oak-panelled, picture-hung hall for a little, while the butler took his card to the library.

"Sir Reuben will see you at once," said the butler when he came back. He led the way as he spoke. Blakiston followed him up half a dozen stairs, and entered the long low room where Sir Reuben was sitting in a monster chintz-covered chair. The Baronet gave Blakiston his hand and asked him to sit down. The cashier sank into the unexpected depths of an enormous Chesterfield. He leaned back, waiting for the Salt King to begin, looking at the hard-chinned, thin-lipped face, with its white hair and its little black thread-like moustache and the cruel lines that channelled down from beside the nose to the corners of the drooping mouth. Sir Reuben was not pretty to look at. His heart was reputed evil as his face, and his record was milestoned with shattered promises and black with broken faith, though now, of course, he was past all that. In the great world people spoke of him as a man whose word was his bond. It was only in the little town where he had made his way that the old, unsavoury reputation clung. There he was known for a man who had taken everything and who gave nothing at all.

"Well, what is it?" he asked at last. "Nothing wrong with the scrip, I hope? It seems all right."

"No, sir," answered Blakiston, "there's nothing wrong with the scrip." But he waited. There was no hurry—not the least in the world.

Sir Reuben regarded him curiously. The curiosity won on into anger almost at once. The other was so cool that there was surely nothing amiss. What had he come for? And why the devil did the fellow want to stare at him like that?

"What is it, then?" he asked at last, feeling that he had been jockeyed into a question that ought to have been answered unasked. "Anything wrong at the bank?"

Blakiston inclined his head.

"Yes," he acknowledged, "there is something wrong at the bank."

Sir Reuben looked grave.

"Has Mr. Musgrave given you a letter to me?"

"Mr. Musgrave is away, Sir Reuben. I am taking his place."

The Baronet began to see what he believed to be daylight. "You're not very experienced, and you've made a little mistake, and you want my word with the directors. I must say I can't commend your action, Mr. er—er——"

"Blakiston," said the cashier, bowing.

"Mr. Blakiston," Sir Reuben completed. "As I was saying, I can't commend your action. The proper course was to communicate with the head office. The head office, if need arises, communicates with the directors. Your action is unusual—most unusual!"

"So are the circumstances," said Blakiston in level tones. Then he proceeded quietly. "Four fifty-pound Bank of England notes were taken from my desk this morning."

"What—stolen?" Sir Reuben, who had robbed five hundred salt-workers of their birthrights, fairly jumped.

Once more Blakiston bowed.

"'Stolen' is, I fear, the only possible word," he agreed.

His almost insolent calmness stung the Baronet into fury.

"Good Heavens, sir!" he cried. "Two hundred pounds of the bank's money gone, and you don't care twopence! If you're to blame, you'll be broke for it, mark my words!"

Blakiston permitted himself to smile.

"I am in the bank's hands," he observed suavely. "But perhaps you will allow me to place you in possession of the facts. This morning I was sending the notes by post to a customer on the Continent. The notes lay in an envelope on my table while I was writing a covering letter. Just then a client came in. I put the notes into a drawer, which I locked. But I omitted to remove the key. Then I left the room, on the client's business, for five minutes. No

one else entered it. That I am prepared to swear. After the client had gone, I looked in the drawer for the notes. They were not there. Beyond doubt the client had stolen them during my absence from the room."

Sir Reuben shook his head and looked at Blakiston with cold contempt.

"You were careless—very careless! I am afraid the bank will take a most serious view of the case. But, of course, you may be able to recover the notes. Personally, I regard it as improbable."

He paused, expectant of the suspect's name. But Blakiston gave no hint, and curiosity got the better of him. He leaned eagerly forward.

"Who was the client?" he demanded in a half whisper.

Blakiston in his turn leaned forward.

"Your daughter!" he answered deliberately. And his eyes held Sir Reuben's, magnet-wise.

The Baronet leaped to his feet. A terrible fear showed in his face. Then fury eclipsed it.

"You scoundrel—you infernal scoundrel!" he cried. "It's a lie—an infamous lie!" He stood over the cashier with raised and threatening fist.

Blakiston got up, calm as ever, but, for the sake of his precious piece of evidence, he slipped away behind the great couch. Then he opened his right hand and disclosed a jewelled locket shaped in the fashion of a heart.

"Perhaps you may be familiar with this little piece of jewellery?" he said. "I found it in the drawer of my desk, where the notes had been. The lining of the drawer was dented. It would seem that your daughter, when she—when she played her practical joke—was a little flurried—perhaps even a little disturbed. So her chain got shut in the drawer. When she released it, she was in too great a hurry to notice that the gold heart had got wrenched away."

Sir Reuben was ashen white. But he was a fighter, whatever else he might be.

"I am not prepared to admit that it *is* my daughter's locket!" he cried.

Blakiston shrugged his shoulders. The old man was only making things harder for himself. He turned the gold heart over in his hand.

"The initials are R. E. B. B.," he said. "They stand for Ruth Elinor Benyon-Blayne. I took the trouble to verify that from my books."

They faced each other in silence, the successful man and the shut-in cashier. It was the Baronet's eyes that fell. He swung round and strode over to the door. "I am going to have a conversation with my daughter," he said. His voice was so feeble that it hardly reached Blakiston's ears. The door shut upon him, and the cashier was alone in the long, low, Elizabethan room.

Blakiston, with triumph surging in his heart, went over to the window and looked out. Below him lay the gate-towered quadrangle, and, beyond, the sweep and fall of the great park, and in its midst the lake on whose margin Addison had walked with the man who had Sir Roger de Coverley for a cloaking name. But Blakiston beheld none of these things. He only saw success ready for the grasping, and knew that he was going to have a Branch of his own. That was to be the price of silence; this he had determined from the very first. It was but a question of how big a one—of how high he dared to make his demand. And he did not mean that it should be low. Then, since in time of triumph, as in hours of storm and stress, a man is fain to ponder his own image, he crossed the room again and looked at himself in a tall mirror that ran down to the floor.

He saw a man of rather more than middle height, with black hair and grey-blue eyes, whose whites were clean with the cleanness of frugal living and many outdoor games—a man clad in well-worn tweeds, whose trousers showed a careful hard-pressed crease—a head high-poised and unashamed, a pair of shoulders broad to drive a screamer against the wind or to bear trouble, if need should come. In all, then, he saw one who though long held close in the grip of unsuccess, had never knowingly done a shady thing or cheated his neighbour or sullied with conscious deed his *panache*. And then, instinctively, his eyes travelled to a portrait of the Salt King, painted by a great modern with a devilish gift for truth. For the artist who had achieved the likeness seemed, also, to have laid bare the soul. Blakiston shuddered. From that moment he was lost and saved.

"What a blackguard he looks!" he said to himself. And he turned away to the window and looked out upon the park again, while in his ears an unspoken voice clamoured words that he strove fiercely not to hear.

Then suddenly the sun shone, lighting the great room. Blakiston felt something

snap within him. The brightness pressed upon his firm resolve as it might press upon and extinguish a glowing fire, and he saw clearly all that he had not allowed himself to see.

He felt himself weakening. He felt as if success were going to slip from his grasp, cut adrift by his own unsteadfast hand. The knowledge stabbed him; he fought against it, tried despairingly to be strong. "What does it matter?" he told himself. "You harm no one. You only get justice—justice after all these years. You have been shut in; you have found a way out. And now, feeble fool that you are, would you close the door that can never open again?"

He thought of his wife. She need never know how promotion had been won. But he had the habit of telling her all things, and he knew that, soon or late, he would tell this. He thought of his children—in especial, he remembered his boys. And there was one thing that he could not forget. He had brought them up to be sportsmen, to be chivalrous, to play the game. And, for their sakes, he, their father, was going to play unfairly—in a word, to blackmail!

Blackmail! Was it that? Had not a parent the right—the inalienable right, so that he harmed no man—to do what he could for his own. Instinct, heredity, upbringing, shouted their "Noes." He knew that he had not, but he tried to lash himself into the opposite belief. It was useless. He had played life's cricket too long to be ignorant of its rules.

He had come back from the window again, and as he stood in the middle of the room, facing alternately his own image and the portrait on the wall, he felt like a prisoner in some dungeon of the Inquisition—as if the walls of his cell closed in upon him implacably, inch by inch. He felt like a wild beast in a cage, but without the brute hope of ultimate escape. He felt like a man who, having knotted about his neck a well-soaped noose, of his own volition kicks away the chair. It was suicide—official suicide—that he was going to commit. And yet instinct, heredity, and upbringing assumed their gradual own. "I can't go through with it!" he whispered. And then aloud: "Oh, you fool, you fool!" He was, had he but known it, a puppet in his forebears' hands. Scheme as he might, dream as he would, he was too clean-bred to be in this, his hour of trial, a cad.

He dropped down upon the Chesterfield and sat there with his face in his hands, urging himself to be strong, striving to drive himself into being what he could never become. Presently he realised that he had failed. Resolution had slipped from him at lightning speed. And he only knew that he must play the game.

At last the door opened and Sir Reuben came back. He walked unsteadily, and a twitch hovered about the thinness of his lips. Blakiston stood up. He likewise lurched a little, and his mouth trembled, too. So they faced each other, both of them beaten men—the one vanquished by his child's shame, the other the victim of heredity which would not be denied.

Sir Reuben spoke first.

"I have had a conversation with my daughter," he said shakily, "and I allow that there are circumstances which make the case out of the common run. You are a young man, and the loss is a heavy one. I am not ill-disposed towards you. Taking everything into consideration, I am prepared to assist you in replacing the notes."

Blakiston smiled—feebly, yet unmistakably—but he remained silent. The Baronet went over to his desk. There he took out his cheque-book and wrote. When he had finished, he tore the slip from its counterfoil and handed it to the cashier. Blakiston took it, examined it, and handed it back.

"There is a slight mistake," he said. "The value of the notes was two—not *three*—hundred pounds."

The other glanced at him.

"Ah, yes," he conceded, "that is so! The agitation of the moment doubtless accounts for my mistake. A charge such as has been made is sufficiently disturbing, even though it has no foundation in fact."

Blakiston bowed. Sir Reuben hesitated, then went on.

"The mistake, Mr.—er—Blakiston, is a trivial one. It is not worth the trouble of setting straight." And again he held out the cheque.

Again Blakiston bowed. But this time he went scarlet and put his hand behind his back. For the first time he saw the full depth of the abyss upon whose brink he had stood.

"I am not a blackmailer," he replied quietly. It was as if the words were forced upon him by some unknown, unseen force.

The Baronet, frowning fiercely, regarded him hard and long. Blakiston sustained the look. Sir Reuben returned to the table and altered the cheque. He blotted it and passed it over to the cashier. The three had

become a five. In another second the slip of paper lay in tiny pieces on the floor.

"If you will draw the cheque for the correct amount," said Blakiston, "I shall be pleased to accept it and to promise you my silence. Otherwise you will force me to report fully to headquarters to-night."

Once more the Baronet looked at him, doubt, anger, and suspicion chasing across his face. Then he sat down and wrote a



"'If you will draw the cheque for the correct amount, I shall be pleased to accept it.'"

fresh cheque. When he got up, he saw the locket in Blakiston's outstretched hand. He took it eagerly, and in exchange the cheque lay doubled in a pocket of the cashier's waistcoat. Blakiston picked up his hat and gloves, knowing that he was officially dead.

"There remains nothing for me to do but to wish you good-day, Sir Reuben," he said. And with a bow he passed out and down the steps into the great hall. There the manservant opened the door, and Blakiston got into his cab.

"The bank," he called—"the bank, and drive like blazes!" He lay back in his corner, despairing and miserable, yet prouder than he, a proud man, had ever been in all his life.

As he passed into his office, he called to the junior clerk.

"Go and see Mr. Winter at the other bank, and ask him if he will be on the links at half-past four," he said. "Before you go, bring me all the letters that there are to sign."

That afternoon Blakiston played precisely thirty-six holes. He would have played fifty-four if the light had not failed. As if by compensation for the chance that he had cast away, he walked over his opponent and performed miles above his form. Then he went home to sup and sleep. The next day he went down to the bank a cashier, with the full certainty that he would never be anything else. At the end of the week his manager returned, and Blakiston resumed the task of carrying him upon his back. He did it as quietly and efficiently as ever, though he never ceased to remember that he was damned.

But on his way to the office, just a fortnight after the crisis of his life, he saw the manager coming hot-foot up the hill.

"You've got promotion!" he shouted, all excitement, in his nervous, agitated way, "They've given you a managership! You're to go at once!"

Blakiston stopped dead.

"What?" he cried.

"It's true—quite true! They've given

you Lavington, and they want you to take up duty without delay."

Blakiston looked at him bewilderedly, then leaned against the railings for support.

"Good Heavens!" he said. "Sir Reuben's a sportsman, after all!" For Lavington was one of the bank's best branches, and might, by industry, be made better still.

The manager looked at him knowingly.

"Sir Reuben?" he cried. "What's Sir Reuben got to do with it?" And he laughed his nervous, irritating, incompetent's laugh. "You sly beggar!" he hinted. "You've been pulling the strings somehow."

Blakiston did not contradict—he was too breathless, too happy, to find words—but this is what he was saying to himself—

"The old ripper! He's taken it like a brick! How I misjudged him! He's a sportsman—a real sportsman, after all!"

Yet his judgment had been sound, and he was wrong now—out of it and hopelessly mistaken. Sir Reuben was not a sportsman—not the least little bit in the world. He was simply a man who trusted no one, and who believed in making things absolutely safe.

And, characteristically, the precaution had cost him nothing—not even his railway fare to town. For he enjoyed a season ticket at the shareholders' expense.

MOTH, THE FOOL.

"A FOOL! A FOOL! I MET A FOOL IN THE FOREST."
—*AS YOU LIKE IT.*

HIS motley glimmered through the fern,
He gazed into the forest-pool
As magians for a star's return,
Then sighed: "I am only Moth, the fool,
And I grow old—too old to learn;
Yet, heigh-ho nonny, Love doth rule!
And the heart of the wisest, if it yearn,
Will put his eyes to school.

"Once, leaning o'er this lustrous well,
She saw her beauty mirrored there.
'And there it still shall dream and dwell,'
She smiled, 'to grey old Time's despair!
From the worn arras fades the spell
Of many a dead queen's eyes and hair;
But this to kings unborn shall tell
I, too, was young and fair.'

"So Merlin, at my queen's behest,
By all the powers that he could sway,
Sware that, whene'er in perfect rest
The enchanted pool at sundown lay,
Her image in its gleaming breast
Should dream—a changeless moon of May!
They laughed, then into the crimson west
Spurred their white steeds away.

"This well, her mirror long ago,
Has watched the white moon wax and wane,
The green boughs rustling to and fro,
For centuries of sun and rain:
I gaze into its depths, but, oh,
They smile at mirth, they mock at pain!
A thousand faces come and go,
The one face never again!

"Nay—there were ripples—I have not seen!
For o'er my wood a minster spire
Points heavenward: through my hawthorn screen
Trembles the chanting of the choir;
Leaves breathe; a gold dew drips between
The boughs; then God's great stars conspire
To break the blue calm round my queen
With shafts of silvery fire.

"But Merlin sware it! So I stayed,
And stay still by my lonely pool,
Often weary, often afraid,
For this blind brain comes late to school,
And has not learnt yet. Man and maid
Pass laughing! Love, King Love doth rule!
But—I wait for the face that never shall fade,
Being only Moth, the fool."

ALFRED NOYES.

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WHEN THE CURTAIN ROSE.

By JOHN BARNETT,

Author of "Eve in Earnest," "The Prince's Valet," etc.

FROM ten o'clock in the morning until six in the evening Miss Duranty was an automaton, a soulless machine that tapped out arid business letters. From 6.1 p.m. precisely, except when overtime was exacted from her, until 9.59 in the morning she was a great lady and a dreamer of dreams.

So you behold her, upon a certain winter evening, a slim, straight shred of a girl, pale-faced, with dark, soft hair and grey, pensive eyes. It is well in many ways to be a dreamer—one can forget at will the hateful click of the typewriter, and the curtness of an employer suffering from an outraged liver—but it does not always make for practical wisdom. Miss Duranty, as usual, had stepped straight into her dreams from the door of the office near Covent Garden, and in their dear company her feet forgot their weariness and led her woefully astray.

London was wrapped in a thick, dark, tawny fog. It blurred and distorted the bright lights of the shops in the strangest fashion, and it covered pavement and road with shining, glinting moisture. Out of its veil broke scurrying, grinding motor 'buses and the patient heads of horses, with a suddenness that was trying to the nerves; but Miss Duranty did not heed such trifles. She had wrought a miracle—she had put back the clock a dozen years or more. And now she was once again a small girl—a tinily small girl—who owned a big, fair-haired English father and a small, gay, dark French mother. They lived in a great house near a little Breton village, where somehow, as it now seemed to Miss Duranty, the sun always contrived to shine. And one was so cared for and sheltered by those two, the big father, slow of speech and laughter, and the small mother, with her darting hands and elfish mirth, that one never even dreamed the world contained such things as grief and danger. It should be said that Miss Duranty was not given to self-pity. It was not her way to make tearful contrasts between the past and present when she came back from dreams. Rather they were to her a snug safe home and refuge, whose door she might open at her will, and shut behind her upon the greyness of the world. It was as though they were more real to her than the concrete, slightly distasteful facts of every day.

And that evening she was startled from them by a sudden cry for help. She was in a street that was entirely strange to her—a narrow street of high drab houses and dingy shops, crammed with curious articles of food. As a matter of fact, she had wandered into one of those byways off the Tottenham Court Road where strange things chance at times. In the muddy roadway a man was struggling with three others. He was tall and slight, with crisp yellow hair, and to Miss Duranty he seemed to tower above his swarthy thick-set assailants. The light from a lamp-post pierced the waves of fog, and the four men were revealed to her as though she stood in the shadows outside a lighted room. She even marked the greasy, curling hair and the gleaming earrings of the three shorter men. Then one of them stepped swiftly behind the tall young man, and Miss Duranty tried to scream as he lifted a weighted stick. But her voice failed her foolishly, and she heard an ugly crashing thud. She shut her eyes involuntarily, and when she opened them, the three were bending over their victim.

And then was Miss Duranty true to her dreams and to the good blood in her veins. It is something, after all, to be a great lady in one's dreams, to remember always that one's ancestors had regarded with impersonal, scarcely scornful, interest the livid hateful faces that lined the ways the tumbrils went. These things confer a certain obligation. And so it was natural that Miss Duranty should cast aside her first fear and dart without a qualm into the ring of light. She gave one cry for help, and she struck quite fiercely with her slender umbrella at the

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three startled foreign gentlemen, and she took her stand like a small brave tigress above the prostrate man. The foreign gentlemen recovered from their first alarm, and one of them raised his stick. I believe that Miss Duranty was weak enough to shut her eyes again. But a whistle shrilled quite near at hand, and the three foreign gentlemen with one consent evaporated into the fog.

When two policemen came up (they do not investigate trouble singly in that district, if it can be avoided; it is not wise), they found Miss Duranty kneeling beside the tall stranger and crying very weakly and childishly. Those three foreigners would scarcely have recognised their bright-eyed rash assailant. But, you see, Miss Duranty had done her work, and could indulge in weakness.

When her story had been duly entered in an imposing official notebook, she walked to the hospital beside the ambulance.

"It is a curious case," the ward nurse told her some ten days later. "He is going on as well as can be, and picking up strength fast, but his memory is a complete blank. He does not even remember his own name."

Miss Duranty expressed her surprise.

"Yes, certainly curious," the ward nurse admitted, with a trace of condescension. "But not unique—oh, dear, no, not unique!" Her shrewd grey eyes, that had studied human nature in its extremities of grief and pain, seemed indisposed to admit that *anything* could be unique. Real courage and unselfish patience under torment, she would have claimed the comparative unrarity even of these.

"Can nothing be done?" Miss Duranty inquired.

The ward nurse became slightly technical. She spoke of a "probable lesion" caused by the blow upon the head, and also of mysterious reasons why an operation was not practicable. Miss Duranty's grey eyes widened and darkened a little as she listened, and her slim hands tightened.

"Is there no hope at all that in time he may recover his memory?" she asked with a little gasp. (Anyone, however callous, is almost bound to feel a little interest in a person for whom he or she has performed some slight service. Miss Duranty would have told you that. Moreover, dreams were not always entirely satisfying, and there were moments when she longed, a little hungrily, for anything, even a dog or a cat, upon which she could expend some small portion of regard. But this she would not have told you.)

"Oh, yes, there is always hope," the nurse answered professionally. "The doctors seem to think there is quite a chance that he may get everything back. But, meanwhile, you will understand that it is a little awkward for him."

And the ward nurse smiled drily. She was a person who indulged habitually in understatement.

"You mean—he cannot let his friends know where he is?" said Miss Duranty.

"Exactly—if he has any friends," the nurse agreed. "And what can he do to support himself when he leaves here? His linen is marked A. P., but the initials convey nothing to him. There is not a single letter or card in his pockets that can help to throw light upon the matter."

"What can be done?" Miss Duranty asked with knitted brows.

The ward nurse shrugged her thin adequate shoulders.

"The police are advertising his description and doing what they can," she said, "but many people never see advertisements. Well, if nothing turns up, the poor gentleman will have to start life again at about thirty, I suppose, without a name or friends or memory, and with a working capital of something under a sovereign."

Then, having summed up the case succinctly, she clinked her keys, and intimated subtly to Miss Duranty that she had other duties than those of conversation.

"May I—do you think that he would care to see me?" asked the visitor.

"He has asked to do so, if you ever came. It will be a change for him, and may do good. Come this way, please."

Miss Duranty was aware of rows of neat beds, from which peered white, curious, wistful faces, of an atmosphere laden with pungent iodoform, and then—she had halted, the nurse had vanished, and two strangely large eyes were regarding her beneath a bandage. For a moment she did not say anything. Somehow she had forgotten that there would be bandages, and that the face would be thinner than the one that she so clearly remembered. And then she realised that the eyes were smiling, and that the mouth beneath them—it was rather a delicate mouth—was smiling too.

"Won't you sit down?" said a voice gently; and Miss Duranty became aware of a wooden chair, and sank into it with a

little confused murmur. Now, as a rule, Miss Duranty was not given to confusion.

"It was very good indeed of you to come," resumed the voice. "What should one say, that is not banal or inadequate, to a person who has saved one's very worthless life?"



"Miss Duranty tried to scream as he lifted a weighted stick."

And then Miss Duranty found her voice.

"Oh, but I didn't!" she said quite eagerly. "Do you know, I am very ashamed to confess it, but at the critical moment I believe I closed my eyes!"

"What a terrible confession of cowardice!" remarked the voice whimsically. "But I have heard quite a different version."

"Mine is the true one," Miss Duranty asserted almost defiantly.

"I shall continue to believe the other," the voice stated firmly. And then the conversation languished a little, because the owner of the voice appeared to be quite aware of the fact that it was not exactly good manners to stare fixedly at his visitor, and yet was unable, to his own slight shame, to refrain from so doing. Well, it is a fact that the walls of our hospitals are sadly bare, and provide few really entrancing objects for the gaze of the patients.

The clumsiness of his methods awoke a little feminine contempt in Miss Duranty the while she questioned him as to his health in a voice that had quite recovered its gentle, pretty serenity. She knew that, for her part, she would be able to study this young man's appearance and characteristics without his ever being aware of the process. And in truth she was remarking many things about him, amongst others the curious elusive charm of his lean face, and the shapeliness of his long-fingered sinewy hands. Miss Duranty possessed all a woman's almost terrifying eye for detail.

"Yes, I shall soon be fit again," the young man said. "But—it is a little stunning to find oneself without name or identity. One

has no landmarks at all. But I suppose one can grow used to anything."

"It must be terrible," Miss Duranty agreed gently. "But they think you will recover your memory."

"At present it is embarrassing in many ways. Where do I live? Who is my tailor? What is my profession? How should you say that I have earned my living, Miss Duranty?"

He held out his hands towards her, laughing a little. Miss Duranty inspected the extended palms with gravity, but her cheeks were a trifle flushed.

"You have never done any manual work," she said, "or your people before you, I should fancy. But—there is no need to look at your hands to tell you that."

"The field is very wide," the young man said with mock solemnity. "I might be a burglar—they have to take care of their hands nowadays, I believe—or a journalist, or a clerk. I can hardly be a Cabinet Minister, I suppose, or Royalty, because my disappearance would have made some stir. It is humiliating to realise that I must be a nobody. But—I am certainly an egoist. Will you not, as a pleasant change, tell me something about yourself, Miss Duranty?"

"Oh, I am not in the least interesting," Miss Duranty assured him. "And the nurse is signalling that I have overstayed my time. It will not do to tire you."

"There is no risk," the patient pleaded. "But you will come again—you will be sure to come again?"

And Miss Duranty promised that she would, with a little thrill of secret pleasure that he should want her to come, and somehow she was aware that the eyes beneath the bandage followed her with a kind of desolation as she moved away.

And she came again. Upon an afternoon when the pale London sunshine was gleaming in at the high windows, and gilding white, thin faces and dazzling tired eyes, she let him persuade her to speak simply enough of her own fortunes. Almost from the first they had been as friends to whom speech is easy. She told how a sudden cloud had dulled the sunshine of that home in Brittany—of the day when the small gay mother ceased from laughter, when her delicate white hands were stilled from their vivid darting life—and afterwards life had not been the same, for it held a dull, aching blank that not even time would wholly fill.

Miss Duranty could not remember that her father ever laughed again with careless gaiety until a certain terrible autumn day of sudden driving wind and rain. They had been fishing alone in their little sailing-boat, and in their sport they had not noted the darkening of the sky. All in a moment it was as though the sea rose upon them, flung by a yelping wind. And then they were leaping and staggering towards the harbour under a rag of sail, and behind them raved and swung the yeasty, cruel rollers. Miss Duranty could recall little of that passage, but she did remember clearly how her father had tied the one life-belt around her with one hand as he steered the reeling boat. Then he had put his arm about her, and she had heard him laugh, softly and gaily, like a schoolboy whose home is near. She believed always that he never expected to come ashore alive. If so, his instinct had been true. There had been breath in his daughter when she was plucked senseless from the surf, but she came back to life to know herself an orphan.

And then Miss Duranty's tale grew vague, for it had appeared that there was little money for that orphan, although somehow no one was to blame. The details of the story were sadly trite. Speculations had gone awry. A man of simple trust and generosity had paid dearly for true friendship, and his daughter must journey to London to the charity of a wealthy and splendid aunt.

"But I am sure," repeated Miss Duranty simply, "that my father was not to blame."

The splendid aunt had proved to be lacking in certain qualities of greater worth than splendour. She did not refuse her charity, but its recipient must never forget her place. Also, she had possessed daughters, cruel as only plain and marriageable women can be. In that prison-house dreams had been impossible, and life a grey, harsh reality. Miss Duranty did not speak in detail of those dark days. She only said quietly, with a certain sedate pride: "I think that they meant to be kind, but we could not understand each other. It was better for me to go. Oh, you cannot understand how much I wanted some small place of my very own, where I might be myself after my work was done! When I had learned to type, I won that place." And she spoke with a certain dainty humour of a grey round of ill-paid drudgery, for which most women reared as she had been would have exacted sympathy. But it is likely that her listener understood. Even in these prosaic days a magic witchery still lingers, by right of which and by the gift of sympathy even a dull man may understand unspoken words.

"It is the old story of the princess disguised as the goose girl," he said when her tale was done. And his eyes were less flippant than his voice. "She was not fit for such work in spite of her high courage. The heavy shoes galled her feet, and the people were rough when they meant only to be kind. I wish—I wish that there were such things as fairy godmothers in these days, Miss Duranty."

But Miss Duranty would not admit that she needed such a lady. It was not her way to ask for pity.

Both of these two were somewhat lacking in practical wisdom, and it is to be thought that they accepted the strangely vivid pleasure of these meetings with little care for the vague future. But there came a Sunday afternoon when Miss Duranty was admitted to the ward to find her friend up and dressed in the somewhat threadbare suit of blue serge in which he had been received. And she realised that they had arrived at last at grim reality.

"I am leaving the hospital to-morrow," he said, when he had greeted her. "The world is a great oyster waiting for my knife."

The bandages had been removed, and for the first time the whole of his face was visible. As he smiled, Miss Duranty was struck by his boyish look, although the hair above his temples was faintly streaked with grey.

"I wonder how old you are?" she said irrelevantly; and then, as he shrugged his shoulders with another smile, she coloured a little. "But of course you cannot tell," she said. "Has nothing come back yet?"

"Nothing at all," he answered. "And yet there are moments when I feel on the verge of knowing everything. Then something rolls up and blots it out again."

"It will come back soon," Miss Duranty said with confidence.

"So the doctors say," he answered. "They are interested, and would keep me here if they could; but—there are a dozen applicants for every bed. There are moments when I am afraid of what I may remember. What if I learn to my horror that I have 'done time' in the past?"

"It is possible, of course," conceded Miss Duranty very gravely. And then her dark eyes began to smile irresistibly. "But somehow I do not think that it is very probable," she added.

He bowed his thanks, and then for a little while they were silent. Miss Duranty was thinking hard, with puckered forehead, and he was taking a cowardly advantage of her abstraction to watch her face.

"What will you do?" Miss Duranty asked at last quite bluntly.

"You mean—to earn a living?" he said. "Well, I have been going through my list of accomplishments. It has been rather a depressing occupation. I have lost my identity, but I appear to have retained a curious smattering of education. I write a strikingly vile hand, I find; I have a shadowy knowledge of elementary mathematics, a still more nebulous knowledge of French and German, and, oh, words cannot do justice to the cloudiness of my acquaintance with Greek and Latin! What do you deduce from all that, Miss Duranty?"

"That you were educated at an English public school," Miss Duranty said decisively. "My father was at Rugby."

"I am afraid you are right," he groaned with mock tragedy. "Well, the prospect is not very brilliant, but perish despair! The honesty of my mien shall obtain me some place in a counting-house. I see myself ending up as a merchant prince, Miss Duranty."

Miss Duranty eyed him critically.

"Somehow you don't look quite the typical clerk," she said doubtfully. "And—and they want things like characters and references. I am afraid you may not get a berth all at once. May I—may I make a suggestion without hurting you?"

He coloured a little.

"No," he said quickly, "I beg that you will not."

Miss Duranty looked him full in the face very frankly and seriously.

"I had hoped that we were true friends," she said, and he made a quick gesture of assent, "and true friends may help each other without shame on either side. There can only be shame or hurt, I think, when that help is refused. I do not believe that you wish to hurt me?"

"No," he said very simply, "Heaven knows that I do not. But, indeed, I cannot——"

"I have saved a little money," Miss Duranty said quietly. (Only those who have tried it know how hard it is to save in London upon thirty shillings a week, especially when all one's life one has regarded money as a vague abstract symbol.) "I believe—I am sure, somehow—that when your memory returns, you will be in a position to repay any loan that I shall make. Will you give me the great pleasure of helping you until you find a berth?"

He looked at her with a hot face, and he did not speak.

"I give you my word of honour that, in your place, I would accept such help from you," Miss Duranty said, and quite believed she spoke the truth. "And now—I can say no more."

He saw that her hands were shaking and her lips trembling with nervousness. I believe it was a finer, truer delicacy that made him accept her offer than the one that impelled him to refuse it. He thanked her for her generosity simply and gratefully enough, but he did remember with fervent thankfulness that there was always the chance of enlistment if all else failed. It filled him with a sense of tingling degradation to think that he should live upon her bounty.

And so it was agreed. Miss Duranty arranged with her landlady for a bed-sitting-room for her friend, and thither he came from the hospital. And during the week that followed it must be conceded that, for two impracticable dreamers, those two people conducted themselves circumspectly and with discretion. They met but once a day, in Miss Duranty's sitting-room, when she was returned from her office and he from twelve hours of tramping and rebuffs. But to her he did not retail his experiences in tragic vein. The world seemed a goodly untragic place for that short while, at least, when Miss Duranty presided over the metal teapot and somehow lifted the little shabby room to her own level. But I suppose, seeing that the world is what it is, that the situation held its dangers and might have become impossible if it had endured.

But it did not endure. One evening, when for some ten days he had sought for work in vain, he told her that he had made up his mind to offer himself for enlistment.

"I can stand it no longer," he said. "Oh, I know what a true friend you are, but it hurts to go on like this. You must see that yourself."

She heard him quite quietly. It is probable that secretly she liked him the better for his words.

"Are you quite strong again?" she asked. "I have always thought that, with your full strength, your memory would return."

"Oh, I am strong as a horse," he answered, "but I can remember nothing clearly. Shadowy things come to me, and I try to grapple them, and they vanish. I believe that I shall never remember!"

"I think that you will," she said, and watched him for a while with puzzled, thoughtful eyes. "I shall not argue with you," she said at last. "You know, without my saying, I think, that I should like to help you?"

He caught her hand and held it for a moment, then dropped it swiftly as though ashamed. He was not unduly emotional.

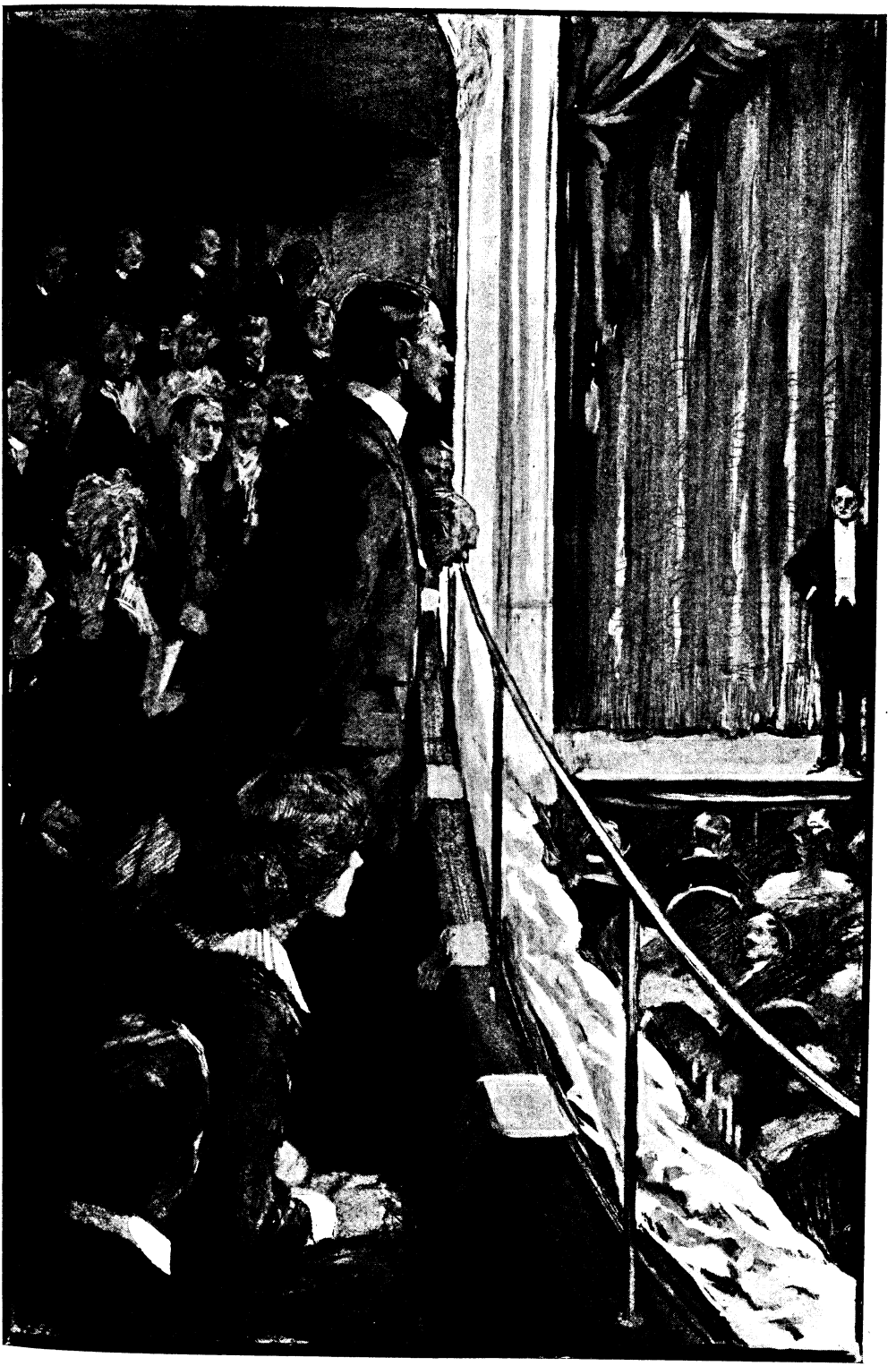
"Yes, I do know it," was all he said. But to himself he thought of the things that he would have wished to say to her, had they been in his power.

"Then this must be our last evening?" she said; and when he nodded with rather a wry face, she went on: "Well, let us be two children for this last evening, and have a treat. My employer has presented me with two theatre tickets for to-night that he is unable to use himself. Would you care to come? Are you fond of the theatre? Ah, but I forgot—you have never been to one that you can remember!"

Nevertheless, to him the prospect was adorable and enchanting. He fancied that in the dim past he must have been a hungry reader of poetry, for his memory was stored with a tangled wealth of haunting verse. Now Browning's magic lines came back to him, and he perceived their wondrous truth. What mattered what lay before him on the morrow, since for a few short hours more he would be "deified"? And for that evening they broke their prudent rules. They joined forces and larders, and took their simple meal together, with the unforced gaiety of children, in Miss Duranty's room. And as they chatted merrily, he never guessed the dark shadow that lay at the back of his companion's mind.

That very evening her employer had warned her that she must look out for another berth. He had spoken with reluctance, for he was inclined to like Miss Duranty, and the gift of the tickets had been intended as a sop to minimise the harshness of the tidings. But he had promised her place to a distant relative of his own. And—and Miss Duranty clearly realised the difficulty of finding another situation; she knew something of the heart-breaking disappointments and rebuffs that would surely lie before her.

But she would not add to her friend's troubles by any reference to her own. She would not cloud the brightness of their last evening together. And so, since women are very brave, Miss Duranty played the child with entire success the while they made gay pretence that they were sharing a sumptuous dinner at the Carlton. And afterwards I



"And then a voice spoke quietly from the upper circle. 'He is here,' it said, 'and he begs to thank you, one and all.'"

think it was with real glee that they walked together through the crisp air along the bright-lit streets. After all, they were together . . . Doubt and fear and grief would surely return, but for the time bright happiness was possible and theirs by right. You had not guessed at tragedy if you had had the fortune to see the face of the slim dark-haired girl who walked beside the tall lean man with the bright boyish eyes.

And now they were in the Arcadian Theatre, in the front row of the upper circle, peering down upon the great folk in the stalls. It was the first night of a new play, and everywhere, in stalls and boxes, were curiously familiar faces. Miss Duranty identified with delight a Cabinet Minister, a famous beauty, a popular novelist. . . . "It is my first 'first night,'" she murmured. "It is wonderfully interesting and exciting. It is like looking into a photographer's window filled with celebrities, only it is far, far better! I wonder where the author of the new play is sitting, and if he is excited, too!"

Her companion was unusually silent. He was looking about him with puzzled eyes, and his face was rather white.

"Do you not feel well?" Miss Duranty whispered anxiously.

"Yes, yes," he answered quickly. "But—but somehow I feel as though it were really all about to come back to me!"

The overture was nearly ended. The bright music had changed, and from the violins there stole a yearning, haunting shiver of sound, suggestive of the sob of the wind above a grey, wintry sea. And then the curtain rose.

The piece was a modern comedy, cleanly and of unusual strength. Through that first act Miss Duranty forgot all about the man at her side in her interest and pleasure. She joined in the generous applause that greeted the effective first entrances of Raymond Dane, the actor-manager, still wondrously slim and handsome despite his years, and Eleanor Curtice, his leading lady of perennial youth. She spared no thought for her companion until the curtain had fallen amid real enthusiasm, and she turned to find that he was shivering as though with cold.

"What is the matter?" she whispered.

He tried to smile.

"I do not understand, and I am almost frightened," he answered. "It is all familiar to me. I seem to know every word that is coming. *It is as though I had seen this new piece before!*"

She stared at him in silence for a moment.

"Then—then——" she began.

"Wait," he said very gently. "Something is coming back to me. I feel as though I were passing into another man's skin. In a little while I believe that I shall remember all that lies behind, but—it hurts!"

His forehead was damp, and he sat for a while with his hands before his face. Then he looked up, and his eyes were curiously dark.

"The next act shall prove if I am mad or dreaming," he said hoarsely. "I believe that the first lines will be: 'So you have seen Barbara, and she is coming here, Frank?' If that is so——"

Miss Duranty did not answer. Her thoughts were all confused, but through them there ran one hope that seemed beyond belief. She felt as though she could not wait for the rise of the curtain upon the second act. But at last the long interval ended.

She saw Frank Damier, the hero, and his sister alone together in the library of a country house. And Miss Duranty, with tight-strained hands, sat there and heard the very sentence that the man beside her had foretold, and—the rest of that act conveyed little enough to her senses.

"What does it mean—oh, what does it mean?" she asked, when at last the clamorous recalls were ended.

There was a flush upon the cheeks of the man whom she had befriended, and his eyes were strangely bright. There was a triumph in his heart—a triumph of which he had dreamed often in the days before the shadow fell upon him. He pointed to the author's name upon the programme.

"It means that I am Arthur Prime," he said quietly. "Oh, and many other things—among others, that I need not enlist to-morrow!"

* * * * *

The play was ended at last. Raymond Dane and Eleanor Curtice had bowed again and again, and now the cry of "Author! Author!" was audible amid the din of applause. Raymond Dane reappeared before the curtain, his handsome face drawn and tired and old with the strain and anxiety of the last few hours.

"Ladies and Gentlemen," he began in his beautifully managed tones, "I regret that Mr. Arthur Prime is not present to thank you for your magnificent reception of his piece. I have reason to believe that he has buried himself in the East End with the



"'Do you think that you deceive me for a moment by posing as a typewriting girl?'"

object of making an elaborate study of the denizens of unfashionable London. At the least, he has left no address at his rooms, and I was unable to get into touch with him when I proposed to produce his play at an earlier date than I had intended. But I shall hope soon to be able to convey to him the news of his success."

And then a voice spoke quietly from the upper circle. "He is here," it said, "and he begs to thank you, one and all." And as Raymond Dane recognised the voice, and

peered upwards in amazement, there broke a thunder of clapping and a great roar of kindly laughter.

The congratulations were ended at last, and Arthur Prime and Miss Duranty were walking side by side in silence, with their eyes upon the dancing magic lights that line the river. Chance, pure chance, had led their random feet to Westminster Bridge. I think it probable that both their hearts were beating fast.

"What Dane said was true," Arthur Prime said suddenly. "It has all come back to me now. I wanted local colour, and I had gone to live and work for a while in the East End. I put on old clothes and left behind all papers and letters that could betray me. They think at my rooms that I am still at work, and there has been no search for me."

"Will not your friends have been anxious?" Miss Duranty asked.

"They are accustomed to what they call my eccentricity. As for relatives, I am entirely alone in the world. But—but I hope to be alone no longer."

"You will be rich and famous now," Miss Duranty remarked with hasty irrelevance. "It—it was not your fault, of course, but—but you have been sailing under false colours."

He halted suddenly upon the great echoing bridge. I am inclined to think that the witchery of the night and of the dark river, with its star gleams and its flickering fairy lights, had turned his head a little. That is my only excuse for the romantic nature of his words.

"We are both masqueraders," he said scornfully. "Do you think that you deceive me for a moment by posing as a typewriting girl? You are a princess, a royal princess, in a most inadequate disguise, starving yourself that still you may find *largesse* for needy folk. All the time I see the gleam of purple beneath the rags. . . . And I—I am a mere commoner, on my knees to your dear highness, pleading very, very humbly that you will deign to take me for your consort. . . . But I simply won't stand any silly delay over the wedding, sweetheart!"

Miss Duranty was never sure whether she laughed or cried at the end of that peculiar speech. But, anyway, the rest is mere folly.

TO ANY DRAPER.

'TIS sale-time, and your restless spirit burns
To take a census of the gloves and ties,
And all the varied kinds of merchandise
To which the draper's fancy lightly turns.
And lo! on every side the eye discerns
Remorseless Woman, as she westward flies
To rend unto herself the remnant prize
For which some weaker sister fondly yearns.

Soon will you gain your end, your heart's desire,
And, far from braid and buttons, drape no more;
With untold wealth respectably retire,
While I still struggle on as heretofore:
And all because you had the wit to see
A shilling might be called "eleven-three."

HANSARD WATT.

ENGLAND'S STORY IN PORTRAIT AND PICTURE.

XIV. THE REIGN OF RICHARD II.

RICHARD OF BORDEAUX, named after his birthplace, where his dead father, the Black Prince, had held his court as governor of the English possessions in France, was only eleven years old when his grandfather, Edward III., passed away at the midsummer of 1377, but his accession to the throne was well received by the nation generally, partly as the opening of a new *régime* after the decline and dotage of Edward's last years, partly by reason of the splendid popularity of the young prince's famous father, Edward the Black Prince, who had not lived to wear the crown, and partly, no doubt, because of the habits of order and obedience to which both baronage and populace had become accustomed under the wise rule of the first Edward, and then, after the troubled interval of his son's reign, throughout the long reign of Edward III. For within that period there happened much that contributed to the gradual consolidation of commerce and of the social life of the country generally.



RICHARD II., KING OF ENGLAND 1377–1399.
From an early painting in the Jerusalem Chamber, Westminster Abbey.

Still such a child, however, was the new king, that he was unequal to the physical strain of the elaborate pomp and ceremony which marked his coronation in Westminster Abbey, and in the course of the solemn mass which followed his investiture with the regal insignia, he was borne fainting from the scene, but was able to reappear in Westminster Hall later in the day. On the following day, the prelates and barons held a great council to arrange the form of the new government during the minority of the king, and it is interesting to note that they did this at the petition of the House of Commons, which had been steadily growing in importance throughout the previous reign. There was now appointed a council of twelve, consisting of two bishops, two earls, two barons, two bannerets, and four knights, to direct public affairs, but the young king's three uncles, the Duke of Cambridge, the Duke of Gloucester, and John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, were excluded from office,

the last-named being especially distrusted as ambitious of kingly power. But the first Parliament of the new reign became reconciled to Lancaster, and he regained the ascendancy which he had held in the declining years of Edward III., and became practically regent for the young king, though not officially recognised as such.

Edward III. had left his grandson deeply involved with neighbouring countries. The war with France was still being carried on spasmodically, and within a few weeks of Richard's accession, the French King made a new alliance with Henry of Trastamare, were soon made good, but more serious was the continued expenditure of vast sums of money on further fruitless campaigns in France. One of the last public acts of the reign of Edward III. had been the levying of a poll-tax, and in 1381 a tax of three groats was averaged against every member of the community of the age of fifteen, of either sex, the well-to-do, in large parishes, relieving the poor by paying more in proportion. In villages where there was no great man, the poor had to pay the full shilling. Attempts were made to evade this by trickery, and the severe punishment of



"THE DAWN OF THE REFORMATION: WYCLIFFE SENDING HIS PREACHERS OUT INTO THE WORLD."
BY W. F. YEAMES, R.A.

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to challenge John of Gaunt's claim to the crown of Castile. A fleet equipped conjointly by these two allies ravaged the south coast of England and the Isle of Wight, but was repulsed with heavy loss. Hostilities were thereupon renewed in France, Sir Hugh Calvery, the Governor of Calais, invading Picardy, and John of Gaunt leading an army into Brittany.

Scotland was now in sufficiently close relations with France to know the psychological moment for breaking truce, and a Scottish force seized Berwick, while a joint fleet of Scottish, French, and Spanish crews took possession of the shipping then concentrated off Scarborough. These reverses such evasions aroused widespread indignation. From this arose the Peasants' insurrection, of which one of the promoters was the priest John Ball, who passed through the country preaching the equality of men in the eyes of God, and claiming a like equality in relation to the law of the land. His text has been handed down to us in the doggerel couplet:—

When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?

The rising gained a vigorous leader in Wat Tyler, a Dartford artisan, to whose banner flocked malcontents of the peasant class to the number of nearly a hundred thousand. The insurgents marched on



"THE CORONATION OF RICHARD II., 1377: THE BOY KING CARRIED OUT FAINTING."

By A. Forestier.

London, burned down the prisons, sacked the Savoy Palace, as the residence of the Duke of Lancaster, and put to death a number of unpopular citizens who fell into their hands. The young king, with considerable courage, rode forth from the Tower to Mile End with but a small retinue, unarmed, to hear the demands of the insurgents. These were the abolition of serfdom, the reduction of the rent of land to a uniform rate of fourpence the acre, in place of the system of villeinage, the free liberty of buying and selling in all fairs and markets, and a general pardon for all participants in the rising. Richard granted these requests, and a large proportion of the insurgents dispersed homewards; but before the king returned to the City, Wat Tyler and another leading spirit of the revolt, Jack Straw, marched on the Tower, with some four hundred of their followers, and seized and beheaded the Archbishop of Canterbury and six other personages of the court whose names had become unpopular with the multitude. The king took refuge at the Royal Wardrobe, his mother's residence in Carter Lane, but the next morning he



ANNE OF BOHEMIA, FIRST WIFE OF RICHARD II.
BY A. BOUVIER.



ISABELLA OF VALOIS, SECOND WIFE OF RICHARD II.
BY E. CORBOULD.

rode through Smithfield with sixty attendants, and met Wat Tyler, who had there reassembled some twenty thousand of the insurgents. There, as he parleyed, the rebel leader provoked the alarm of onlookers by playing with his dagger and even laying his hand on the king's bridle, and Walworth, the Lord Mayor of London, alarmed for the king's safety, struck Wat Tyler to the ground, where one of the king's equerries despatched him. The rebels turned on Richard to avenge their leader's death, but the fifteen-year-old king saved the situation by shouting: "Tyler was a traitor! I am your king, and I will be your leader!"

The crowd wavered and gave in to his spirit, and by the time a strong force had arrived to protect the young king, he was dispersing the rebel throng. Within a few weeks, after assembling an army some forty thousand strong, Richard revoked the charters of manumission which he had granted at Mile End, issued proclamations commanding the villeins back into serfdom, and prohibited assemblies and associations likely to lead to any new uniting of malcontents. The Essex insurgents alone held out, but were subdued with heavy slaughter,

and John Ball and other known leaders, together with some fifteen hundred lesser men, were put to death, and their bodies hung by the wayside to overawe the disaffected.

Thus far Richard had shown himself possessed of personal courage, presence of mind, and a certain intelligence which might have developed into statesmanship; but as he advanced in years, his want of real capacity or sound judgment became increasingly evident amid the troublous circumstances of his twenty-three years' reign. The first foreign affairs to claim his attention, after the suppression of the peasant revolt at home, arose out of the rival



"A PRIEST NAMED JOHN BALL STIRRING UP THE PEASANTRY TO REBELLION, 1380." BY G. HARRIS.



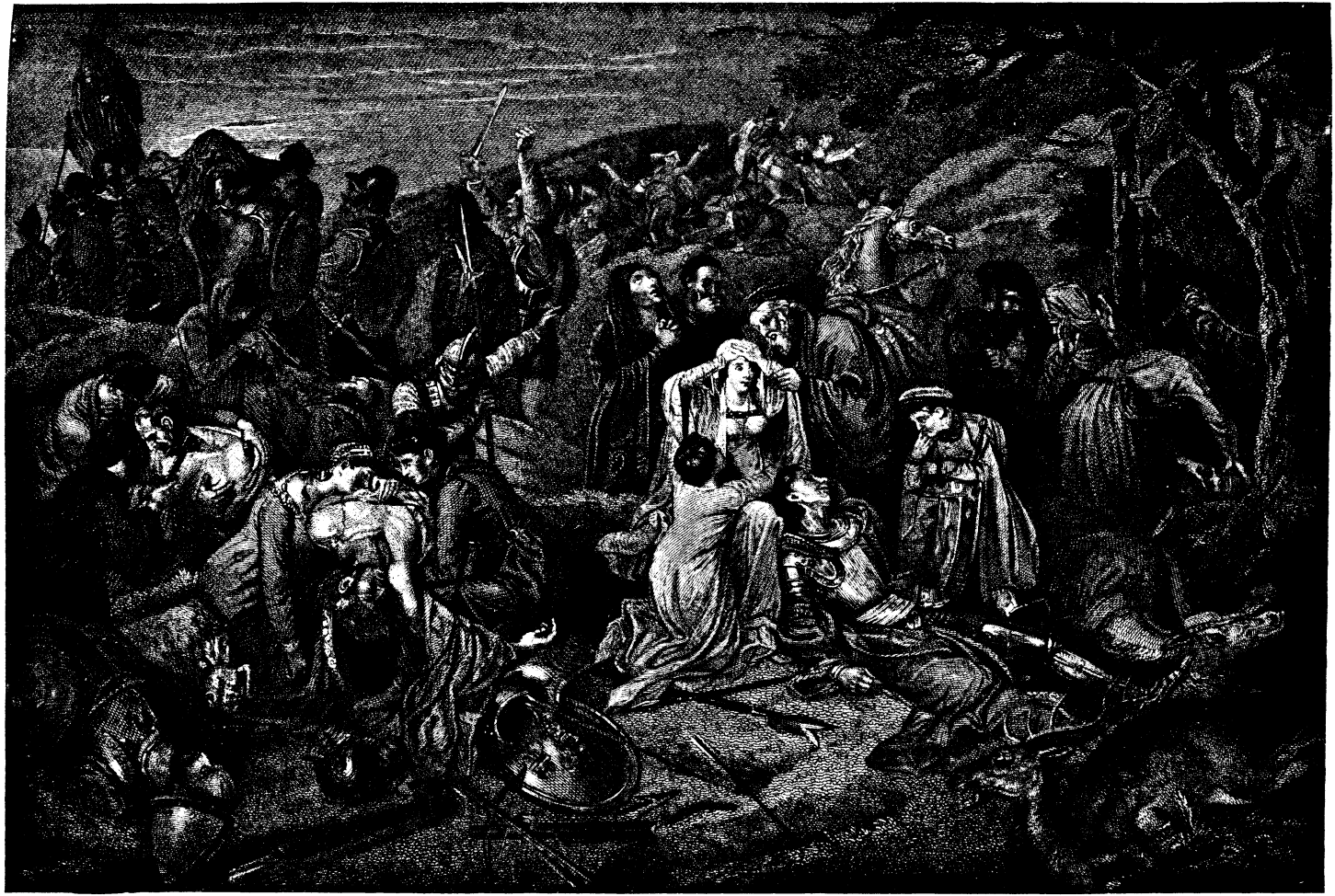
"WAT TYLER KILLED IN SMITHFIELD, 1381, BY WALWORTH, LORD MAYOR OF LONDON, IN DEFENCE OF THE KING." BY JOHN NORTHCOTE, R.A.

claims of Urban VI. and Clement VII. to the papal chair, for France and her allies recognised Clement, while the rest of Europe, including England, acknowledged Urban, who therefore developed a plan for a new invasion of France by a large English force, led by the martial Bishop of Norwich. This army began by helping the Flemings to withstand the King of France; but the expedition accomplished nothing, and a truce with France was arranged, which included Scotland, as the ally of France. But the Scots continued to harry the northern counties, though momentarily repulsed by an army under John of Gaunt, and in 1385, once more reinforced by French troops, again invaded Northumberland. Richard, for the first time, appeared at the head of an army, drove back the Scots, and burned Edinburgh, Dumfermline, Perth, and Dundee; but owing, apparently, to suspicions of the advice of his uncle, John of Gaunt, and doubts of his motives, the king, without turning his successes against the Scots to any permanent account, suddenly disbanded his army and returned to London. John of Gaunt was soon afterwards encouraged by Richard—doubtless for the sake of lessening his influence at home—to lead an expedition into Portugal, to take part in the quarrel over the crown of Castile, and in his absence his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, achieved an ascendancy which involved much party strife in Court and Parliament.

For the struggle lay now between the ministers of Richard's own appointment and his uncles, the Dukes of Gloucester and of York; and Richard's own candidates for office, though by no means all of them unworthy of their posts, were none of them conspicuously successful as ministers, while not only the extravagances of court life, but the expenses of such foreign undertakings as the expedition of John of Gaunt into Portugal, and the sudden necessity for meeting the fleet organised, though without success, for a French invasion of England, necessitated heavy taxation. This earned for the king and his ministers an unpopularity with the nation at large, which gave Gloucester the opportunity for inciting against De la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, a Parliamentary impeachment which expelled him from office in 1386, and forced the king himself to submit to a Commission of Regency which was dominated by his uncles, Gloucester and

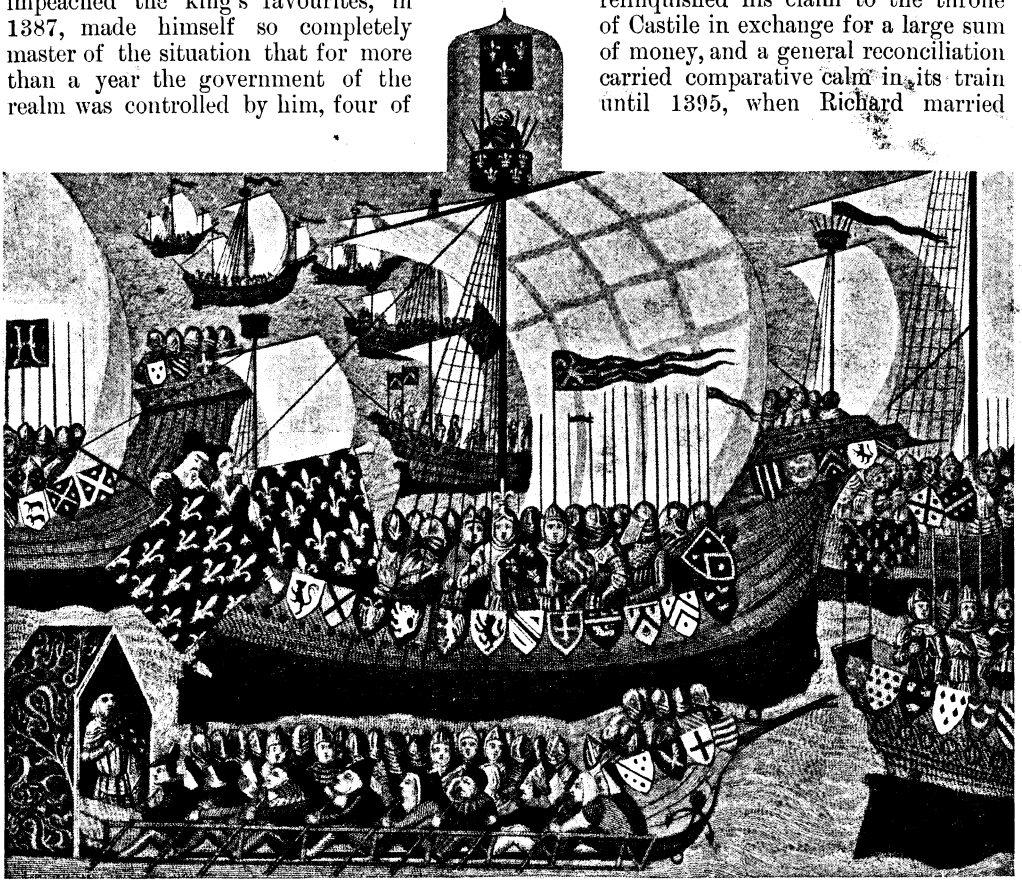


"JOHN OF GAUNT, DUKE OF LANCASTER, SWEARING LOYALTY TO RICHARD II., 1385." BY G. METZ.



"THE BATTLE OF OTTERBURN, OR CHEVY CHASE, 1388: THE DEATH OF EARL DOUGLAS." BY W. M. CRAIG.
From the original in the Sutherland Collection.

York. Richard resisted, and induced the judicial bench to refute the legality of this "Commission," but Gloucester marched on London at the head of forty thousand men, accused Richard's chief ministers of treason, and, leagued with other leading nobles as "Lords Appellant," who "appealed" or impeached the king's favourites, in 1387, made himself so completely master of the situation that for more than a year the government of the realm was controlled by him, four of the king's ministers having been beheaded by order of "The Merciless Parliament."



"EXPEDITION OF THE KNIGHTS OF FRANCE AND ENGLAND TO AFRICA, UNDER THE DUKE OF BOURBON, 1390." BY T. WAGEMAN.

Within this period occurred the further conflict with Scotland which included the battle of Otterburn, now better remembered as "Chevy Chase," from the celebrity of the ballad commemorating its story. The Scots won the day, but lost their leader, Douglas.

In May, 1389, the twenty-two-year-old king, for reasons which we have not sufficient knowledge to reconcile with his previous submission, found himself in a strong enough position to throw off the yoke of Gloucester, whose adherents he also summarily dismissed from their various offices; but Richard's other uncle, the Duke of York, and his cousin, Henry Bolingbroke, son to John of Gaunt, destined afterwards to oust him from the throne, kept the family influence still at work for party purposes. Then John of Gaunt himself returned from Portugal, having relinquished his claim to the throne of Castile in exchange for a large sum of money, and a general reconciliation carried comparative calm in its train until 1395, when Richard married Isabella, the seven-year-old daughter of the French King, Charles VI., thus making a contract of alliance with France, his first wife, Anne of Bohemia, having died two years previously.

Whether Richard was merely avenging himself for past humiliations, or was protecting himself from real perils to his own safety, we cannot now hope to know from the facts that survive, but it is certain that once he had made this new bond with France, he retaliated swiftly on his truculent barons, with executions and banishments, and Gloucester was arrested and taken to Calais, where he was soon afterwards murdered.

All the work of the Parliament which had carried out Gloucester's policy in 1388 was proclaimed no longer legal, and the influence of Parliament was diminished by the delegation of its chief functions to a kind of sub-committee chosen from the king's immediate circle.

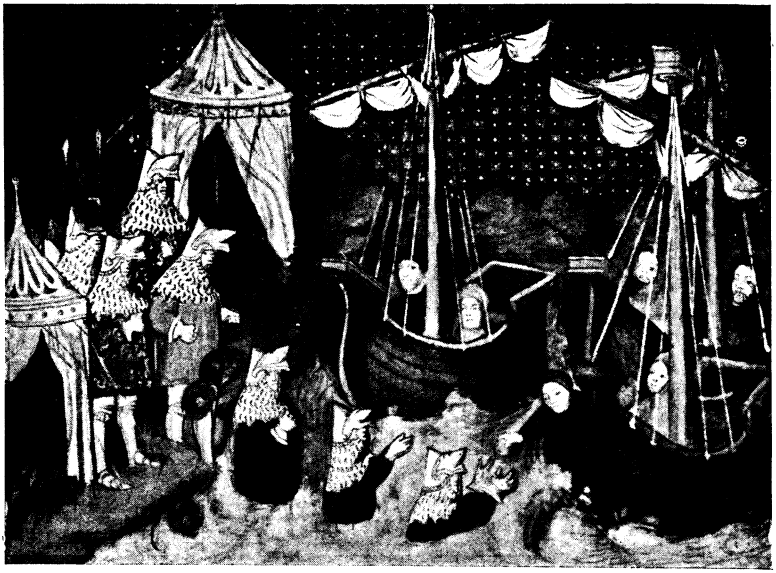
Among the nobles now favoured by Richard were two who, by some strange coincidence, were destined to bring about his downfall—Henry Bolingbroke, Earl of Hereford, son of John of Gaunt and cousin to the king, and Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.

In the party strife which had long surged round the throne, both these men had at different times figured actively in opposition to the royal faction, but under Richard's newly acquired ascendancy in the State, both had become his adherents, and had been promoted to new dignities. Suddenly a passionate feud between these two powerful



"JOHN OF GAUNT HEARING THE CLAIM OF MARGARET, COUNTESS OF NORFOLK, AT THE COURT OF CLAIMS." BY T. WALTER WILSON.

lords became a matter for public recrimination, each fiercely accusing the other of dark deeds and schemes of treason against king and State; and with this new by-plot we reach the moment from which the moving drama of Richard's downfall has been preserved for all time by the lyrical beauty and poignant feeling with which Shakespeare has decorated the actual facts of history, without departing very far from their known course. Trial by combat of the counter accusations of the two turbulent nobles was appointed to take place; but, as Shakespeare's readers will remember, just as the combatants were ready for the encounter in the lists at Coventry, the king surprised both them and the assembled onlookers by throwing down his "warder," or staff, into the arena and forbidding the combat to go forward. He then proceeded to pronounce swift sentence of banishment on both lords, Norfolk being forbidden ever to set foot in his native land again, and Bolingbroke being banished for



"EXPEDITION OF RICHARD II. TO IRELAND, 1398."

The troops, reduced to great want of provisions, were relieved by the arrival of three ships. The soldiers for eagerness ran into the water to receive food. From the Harleian MS. at the British Museum. The drawing was made by one who took part in the expedition.



"RICHARD II. SUSPENDING THE DUEL BETWEEN HEREFORD AND NORFOLK, 1398."

From an old engraving.

ten years. The latter sentence was subsequently shortened to six years.

By this arbitrary action, in direct contradiction of the privileges of their class, Richard deeply offended a number of the leading families of England; and before the year was out he had incurred new unpopularity with the Commons and the populace generally by levying forced loans to meet the extravagant expenses of his court, coercing the judicial bench to meet his requirements, pronouncing unjustified sentences of outlawry, and showing generally a complete disregard for the feelings of his subjects, until it was loudly remonstrated that the liberties of the nation had been betrayed to the king by a too acquiescent Parliament.



"RICHARD II. SURVEYING THE REBEL FORCES FROM FLINT CASTLE, 1399." BY BYAM SHAW.

Reproduced, by permission of Messrs. George Bell & Sons, from one of the illustrations to their "Chiswick" edition of Shakespeare's works.

Within a few months of his son's banishment, the aged John of Gaunt died—one likes to think of him as passing with the wonderful patriot's speech of Shakespeare on his lips — and Richard remarking, according to the poet—

> The ripest fruit first falls, and so doth he;
> His time is spent, our pilgrimage must be,

immediately took possession of all the great duke's property, despite his promise that Hereford's inheritance should not be alienated from him by his banishment, giving as his excuse the expenses of his coming Irish campaign.

Then events marched swiftly, and the ill-advised Richard marched with them headlong to his doom. Reckless of the hostility which his latest act had provoked, he embarked on the military expedition into Ireland to which he was already committed, and Henry Bolingbroke, who had wandered no farther than France in his exile, landed on the Yorkshire coast, where a number of leading barons rallied to his support. The king's uncle, the Duke of York, acting as regent in Richard's absence, put no check to Bolingbroke's march on the capital, though some sixty thousand men had joined him on the way, but withdrew to the west of England

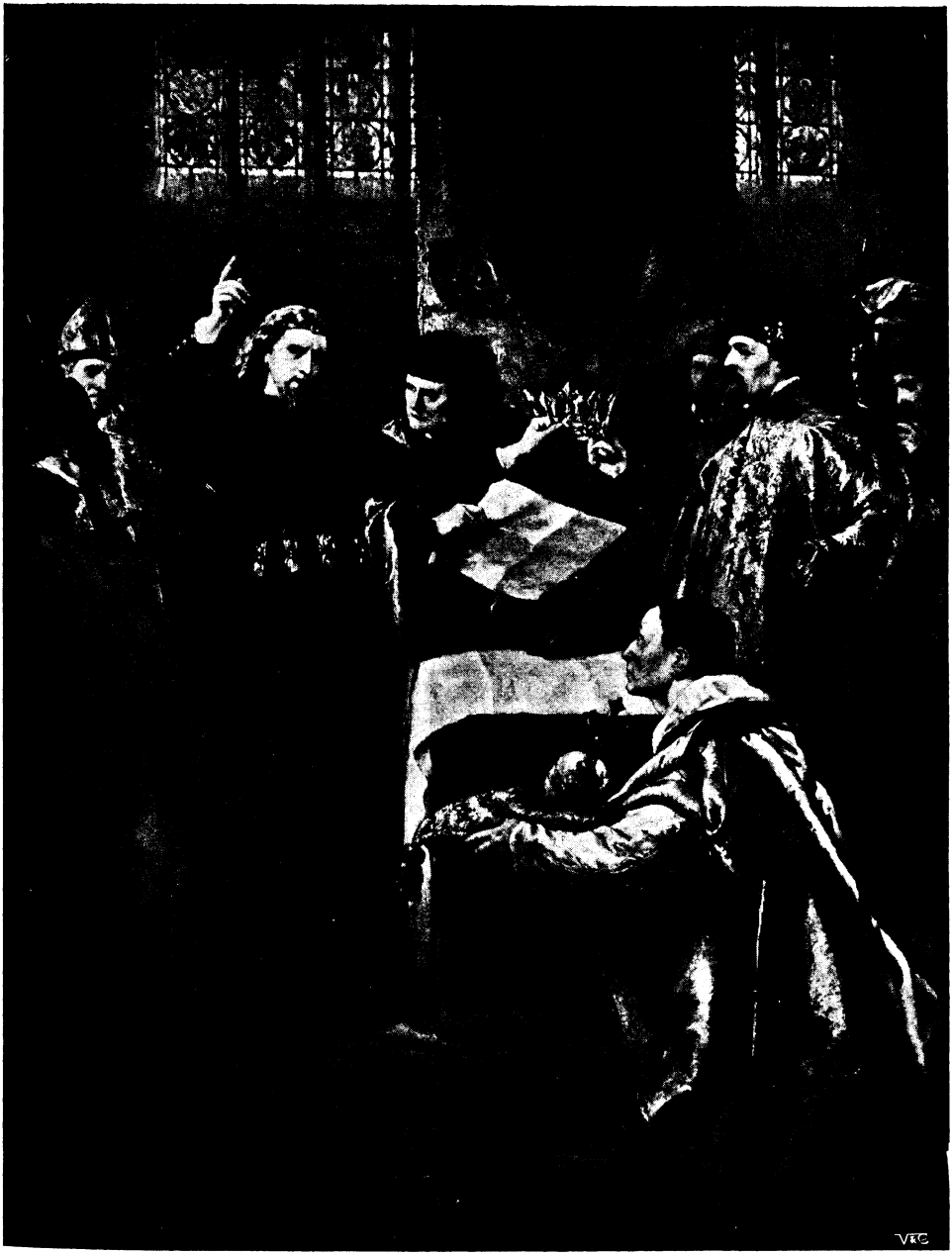
to meet the returning king. But before Richard could arrive, York had thrown in his lot with the invader, and together they besieged Bristol, and took Bushy, Green, and the Earl of Wiltshire, the three misrulers of the king's "Committee of Government," whom they at once put to death. By the time Richard landed at Milford Haven, his exiled cousin was master of the situation, and even those who were attached to Richard himself, or those who saw their own star setting with his, could not rally sufficient support to be of any service. Unable even to escape, Richard had no alternative but to surrender to "Victorious Bolingbroke," into whose hands he was finally betrayed, with specious proposals and promises, by the Earl of Northumberland, at Flint Castle.

From Flint Richard was taken to Chester, where Henry dismissed the greater part of his large force, and thence to London. His entry into the capital, on a wretched horse, beside the usurper Henry, on Richard's own royal charger has been described by Shakespeare with pitiful effect. Parliament had already been summoned in the king's name by writs issued from Chester, and, on the day before it met, Richard was induced by threats and promises to sign a formal abdication of the throne in the presence of a deputation of prelates, nobles, knights, and lawyers. When the two Houses met next day in Westminster Hall, this document of resignation was read aloud, and each member of each House affirmed aloud his recognition of it. Then followed the act of deposition.



"THE ENTRY INTO LONDON OF RICHARD II. AND HENRY BOLINGBROKE, DUKE OF LANCASTER, AFTERWARDS HENRY IV., 1399." BY J. A. ATKINSON.

Thirty-three articles of impeachment were read aloud, charging Richard with acts either illegal or despotic, many of which were such as might with equal justice have been charged against even the best of his predecessors on the throne. His deposition was then formally voted, the Bishop of Carlisle's being the only protesting voice, according to a contemporary French chronicler, and Richard was forthwith pronounced to be no longer king. Henry of Lancaster then "challenged" the throne, urging, firstly, his descent from Henry III., and, secondly, the fact that the realm "was in

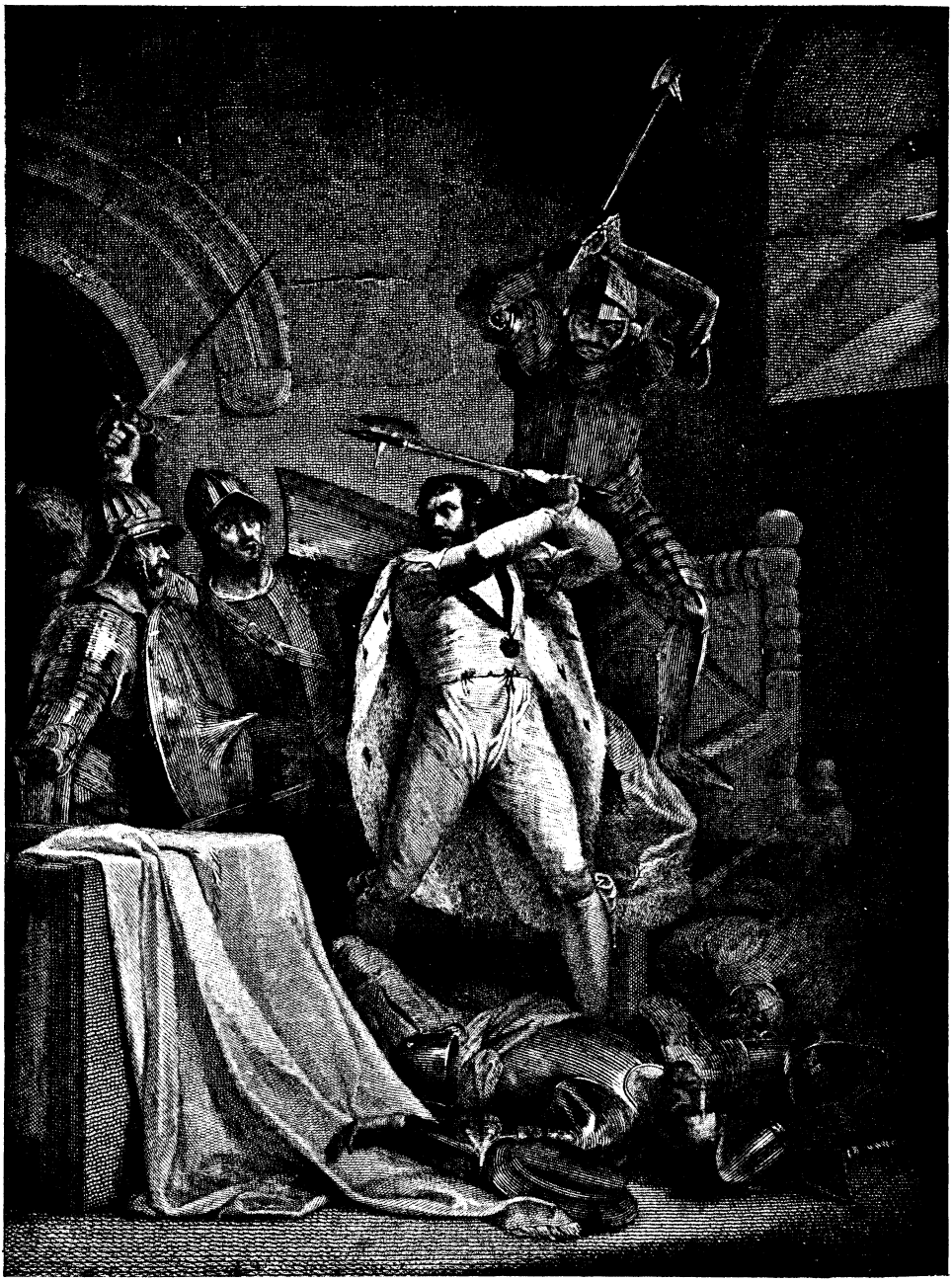


"RICHARD II. RESIGNING THE CROWN TO BOLINGBROKE, 1399." BY SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A.

From the picture in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, by permission of the Corporation of Liverpool.

point to be undone for default of governance and undoing of good laws."

He was, indeed, descended from Henry III. on both sides of his parentage, but his father, John of Gaunt, was only the third son of Edward III., while the Earl of March was the grandson of John of Gaunt's elder brother, the Duke of Clarence. Henry's mother, however, was the great-granddaughter of Edmund, son of Henry III., who, it was suggested by Henry's adherents, had been the elder brother of Edward I., but had been set aside from the succession to Henry III. owing to physical deformity.



"THE DEATH OF RICHARD II., 1400." BY F. WHEATLEY, R.A.

This particular point in his claim does not seem to have been substantiated, either then or later, but he was none the less unanimously acclaimed king by both Lords and Commons, and by the populace gathered outside Westminster Hall.

The dethroned Richard was consigned by the new king's first Parliament to imprisonment for life in some spot not to be made known. Thenceforth all definite record of his whereabouts or very existence seem to have disappeared: but in 1400 his father-in-law, the King of France, publicly referred to news of his death as a reason for abandoning a

punitive resumption of war against England, and merely demanding instead the safe restoration of his daughter, Richard's youthful widow, and her dowry. Soon afterwards the dead body of Richard was brought from Pontefract Castle and exhibited for two days at St. Paul's, where funeral masses were celebrated. After further rites at Westminster Abbey, the dead king was buried at his former country seat of Langley, where his body remained until Henry V. removed it to a more fitting tomb in Westminster Abbey.

How Richard actually came by his death is not known. Shakespeare follows the traditional story that, quite soon after his dethronement, he was killed in his prison by Sir Piers Exton and some hired assassins, after he had made a spirited defence with a battle-axe torn from one of his assailants; but another story avers that he died of starvation.

Judged by the facts of his reign, Richard cannot nowadays be considered as utterly worthless a ruler as his immediate biographers, writing in the reigns of his successors of the House of Lancaster, would have us believe him. Contrasted with his grandfather and predecessor on the throne, he seems to have lacked personal authority to hold his own against the turbulence of his barons, on the one hand, and a growing belief in popular representative government, on the other, rather than actively to have deserved his tragic fate by sheer encroachment on national privileges. Every Parliament of Edward's long rule remonstrated against one arbitrary prerogative on the part of the king or another, yet, throughout the twenty-two years of Richard's reign, no complaints were made till the assembling of his last Parliament, summoned by his usurping kinsman to depose him.

Compared, on the other hand, with such later monarchs as Edward IV., Henry VII., and Henry VIII., Richard is seen to have been more careful than they were to secure at least the outward semblance of Parliamentary authority for even those of his actions which chiefly violated the Constitution. But those of his successors who established an autocracy such as Richard imagined in vain, owed their success to the decimating, by the long York and Lancaster strife, of those very families of great nobles who so easily deposed the last of the Plantagenets, and to that decline of ecclesiastical power which was only just beginning when Richard, or, at least, his guardian, John of Gaunt, showed tolerance to Wycliffe, "The Morning Star of the Reformation," and his Lollard missionaries. The renewed statutes of Mortmain and Præmunire strengthened the Lollard cause, and helped to alienate the Church from the throne and identify it with the great nobles.

His court was certainly luxurious, for he was fond of parade and pleasure, but from actual vice it seems to have been more free than that of many of his predecessors or successors on the throne. But such comparative merits availed him nothing in the balance against his own failure to maintain a despotic theory of kingship which he was not strong enough to uphold.

Even if we have no evidence that he was himself the artist in words that Shakespeare makes him, he was certainly an intelligent patron of the new literature then represented by Wycliffe's translation of the Bible into the English tongue, the poetry of Barbour, the "Confessio Amantis" and other works of William Gower, Trevisa's translation of Higden's "Chronicon," Froissart's histories, and Chaucer's poems.

In architecture, Richard was responsible for the rebuilding of Westminster Hall, which stands to this day practically as he left it after the pathetic scene of his abdication and deposition. He was something of an æsthete, but scarcely, as some historians have assumed, a degenerate, though irresolution and inconsistency, and a hysterical capacity for revenge, characterised many of his actions in the most crucial moments of his career, to his undoing. But a French poet who wrote within a year of his death saw many noble qualities in him, and Shakespeare either found or transformed him into a man, unwise, indeed, but yet more his own enemy than anyone else's, and by nature a visionary, endowed with a fantastic beauty of thought and speech. If this be the true Richard, one must be glad that it is thus that he survives in Shakespeare's embalming pages and on the modern stage, to which he was restored by Mr. and Mrs. F. R. Benson, with their illuminating revival of a too-long-neglected play, at the Shakespeare Festival of 1896. Mr. Benson's poignantly impressive rendering of the hapless king has since kept the play permanently in his repertoire, and Sir Herbert Tree has also given it a sumptuous "local habitation" at His Majesty's Theatre, himself playing the king with a very moving pathos. Thus, thanks to Shakespeare's genius, is the last of the Plantagenets still a strangely interesting and appealing personality.

T

THE EDITOR.

By LAURENCE NORTH,

Author of "Syrinx."

FOR many hours a little flushed face and a fair curly head had bent over the table beside the window. Remonstrance had been in vain, and inquiry into the reason of Hugo's uncanny diligence would have been impolitic. One could only wait until the achievement was declared by the master himself. "Fools and bairns," says the proverb, "should not see half-done work." Hugo's father could not claim to be the latter; he must consent to remain among the former, like Parsifal, "a guileless fool," until the son should speak.

Sheets of manuscript paper littered the writing-table. A plebeian-looking ink-bottle, evidently borrowed from the kitchen, stood far back, in instant danger of being pushed over on to the floor. A long-nibbed, vilely scratching pen, held like a pinch of snuff in fingers unusually slender and beautiful for a child's—Hugo is only eight—came and went laboriously over the paper. Now and then it seemed to draw. Of course, what does a small boy want with a paper that has no pictures? A paper? Paternal curiosity had better curb its audacity. I returned to my work, and the patient little face, with the tongue out, bent closer to its task.

For once the beloved railway system, with its wonderful points, signals, stop-blocks, stations and fascinating rolling-stock, lay neglected. "Greenie," the model of the South-Western engine, was forgotten—"Greenie," the oldest and best-loved of all "my puffies." To it Hugo has been very faithful. It came from Santa Claus three Christmas-tides ago, and was unpacked with little shrieks of delight that rewarded Santa's agents on earth more than they can ever tell. A year later "Greenie" had not a scratch on his paint or a dent on his metal. "Could he be fitted with reversing gear?" We went to the man who sells puffies and asked. "No, alas! But," said the shopman, "as the engine is still perfect—I can hardly believe it's been a year in use—I'll take it back and give you one with reversing gear for only eight shillings more." But dear "Greenie" could not be given up.

Santa Claus, however, is omniscient. Out of his sack that year came "Middie," a more beautiful thing than "Greenie," for "Middie" reproduces a Midland express locomotive far more perfectly than old "Greenie" reproduces the South-Western. And "Middie" reverses. Better still, he trails behind him a fascinating corridor-carriage, with real doors which have tiny handles that actually turn. Also there are movable seats and tables and people inside. Oh, joy! Last of all, on a birthday (it is Julius Cæsar's birthday, too, for Hugo was born exactly 2,000 years to a day after the Dictator), the last and greatest of the engines arrived. It was in the full tide of the Franco-British Exhibition, and many Saturday afternoons I had been coaxed to visit the shrine of Bassett-Lowke. Who that worthy might be I was not aware, I am ashamed to say, until I was told that he was to have an amazing exhibit with a model railway at Shepherd's Bush. Hugo does not read the advertisements of a certain magazine in vain. The rascal even knew his way to the stand without my help. A very plausible rascal, for after he had gloated over the realistic shunting of the model train, he went to the attendant and bought an illustrated catalogue. This he handed gravely to me—"Because, you know, daddy, a boy has a birthday coming soon, and I thought this might help you."

I took the catalogue in stony-hearted silence, but one wet evening, on my way home from the stone-yard, I visited the Exhibition and saw a momentous order sent off to the Great Magician's workshop at Northampton. Hugo had already gone to pay his yearly visit to grandmamma in Scotland, but the Magician's agent knew all about that. There would be no fear of miscarriage for the scale-model—actually a scale-model this time—of a Great Western engine. So "Sidney," express, double-coupled, bogie, reversing, complete to the minutest detail, went North to make a delirious 12th of July a Roman holiday

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"The chief could not draw her out."

indeed. Much fervent gratitude and some bad spelling came South by return of post.

What, then, could it be that had sent these cherished toys to the limbo of forgetfulness?

The afternoon wore on. The sweet spring sunshine, the trees and the meadows, the breeze, so perfect for the new kite, called in vain; for still the scribe toiled away. He would hardly taste his tea. This concentration was not good. Mummy shook her head; but curiosity kept us inactive—unwisely, perhaps. No matter for this once. But it must not occur again. "Do finish your tea, Hugo," Mummy pleaded.

"When a man is going to press," he returned loftily, "nothing can stop him."

The murder, then, was half out. But we waited for details. Very soon there came a pause. "Elsa!" the great man shouted.

"El-sa-a!" The gipsy with her black eyes and elf locks—she calls herself "the Goblin Queen" or "Gobbin"—came deliberately and climbed up to the table. The fair head and the dark were laid together, and one could catch snatches of talk.

"Yes, well, but we *must* have it. Every paper has a 'Lady's Page.'" (Uncertain remarks from Elsa in an undertone.)

"Oh, fashions, you know"—this from the chief scribe—"girls know all about that. No, *you* needn't write; just tell *me* about them."

Elsa does know an amazing amount about dress for six years old, and she has an uncanny way of saying she saw Mrs. So-and-So in that frock last year; but the request to crystallise her worldly wisdom on paper was too much for her. The chief could not draw her out, so with a sigh he let the great "feature" go. Elsa slid down from his side and went back to Goblin Land, which she has discovered below the dining-table. Her adventures there will make another story one day.

Bed-time drew very near. The publicist redoubled his industry. When the unwelcome summons came, he begged for a little grace, "just to finish an advertisement." The leave was granted, and then, flushed, exalted, and with curiously bright eyes, Hugo came to me.

"The way you will get it is this," he said. "Daddy will go to his study, and the paper will be pushed under the door. Then in a little while the boy will call for the money. It is published at a halfpenny."

So much toil for such a great reward!

I went to my room and waited. In a minute or two a faint rustle proclaimed the first publication of the great new organ. I picked it up eagerly.

Yes, at the first glance it was easy to see that the model had been the *Pall Mall Gazette*; but the imitation was not slavish. Hugo takes his good things where he finds them. Shall we say that he touches nothing he does not adorn? I sat down to enjoy my paper. A tap at the door. Enter the Editor, modestly. "The halfpenny for the paper, please. It will appear weekly."

"Now to bed at once," I said firmly, and the capitalist disappeared.

"Really, dear, this must be discouraged. I fear he won't sleep," another voice said over my shoulder.

I agreed with the superior wisdom, and together we sat down to see what our queer little son had written.

At the top of the sheet, in bold ornamental lettering, appeared the title—

The Darley Wood Gazzet.

Then in smaller text—

Edited by Sir David Hugh Seton
(in the Konsulship of Cæsar and Bibulus).

"Good Heavens," Marjorie exclaimed in tears of laughter, "what does the child mean? You talk far too much to him."

"Anyhow," I said, "it will do him no harm to know who was consul with Cæsar. It may save him a thrashing some day."

"I'm not sure," Marjorie said wickedly. "It did *you* no good to have begun Greek when you were five."

"We were talking of Rome, dearest. Let us go on with our *Gazzet*."

Beneath the title a row of diamond-shaped panes enclosed—

VIEWS OF DARLEY WOOD.

"The Station," "The Signal-Box," "The Church," "The Hill."

Drawn by our speshal artist, A. Forrester, from sketches by Welton Friar.

Evidently our son's staff was most distinguished.

A few technical details closed the first page. We turned the leaf eagerly to find—

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

Week ending April 10.

At 10.30 a.m. last Sunday a train with a most pecular engine (see illustration below) passed through Darley Wood Station.

Last Sunday morning the service at Darley Wood Parish Church Room had no sermon.

The mud in Darley Wood Bottom is eight inches deep.

Next week a new Theater train will run from Baker Street at 11.35 p.m.

Below these thrilling lines of sprawling large text came a vigorous drawing of the "most pecular engine" which had caused tremendous excitement. The strange thing about it was a water-tank, pointed like a snow-plough, in front of the boiler, and this was given with excellent fidelity. The ruling passion had asserted itself. We passed to "Reviews of Books" with fear and trembling. Sure enough, a dutiful son had not forgotten his father's latest literary indiscretion. At any rate, the rascal had got the form correctly. The heading was quite faultless—the title, the publisher's name, and the price, were set

down accurately. Then came the criticism. I breathed again. It was not so savage and tartarly, after all. "This," the reviewer said, "is a very interesting book. It shows what great pains the author must have taken to make it publishable."

At any rate, Hugo knows half the reviewer's craft. He had never read a line of the work in question.

Two solemn leaders followed in two wide columns on the next page. The first was upon—

THE NEED FOR MORE DREADNOUGHTS.

Since our last great naval battle, the British Navy has been short of Dreadnoughts, so the Admiralty is proposing to build eight new ones.

The second leader was upon the Paris postal strike. The reasons were discussed with great brevity and point—

The employees said that M. Simyan, the Postmaster-General, dismissed unjustly. So they struck.

He had got over his fashion difficulty like a Napoleon. Under "Lady's Page—Fashions" came the announcement—"Same as last year."

The last page was given up entirely to advertisements. The great maker of model locomotives was puffed to the skies, the editor's father's work had gratifying prominence, the most familiar household things found their due place.

I looked curiously to the very end. Did the child know? Scarcely. Yes, sure enough, his "imprint" was there, in proper form, to satisfy the requirements of the law—

Printed and published by David Hugh Seton at Elm Lodge, in the parish of Darley Wood, in the county of Mudfordshire.



"'Daddy,' he said, 'I am in the position of a paper that cannot get enough advertisements. The *Gazzet* is broke.'"

Marjorie and I laid down the strange broadsheet and looked at each other. "He must never be a journalist," she said quietly.

"Heaven forbid!" I said solemnly. "But I think you needn't worry: the engineer is stronger. This is mere monkey imitation The phase will pass."

"But we've overlooked the supplement," Marjorie cried. "He begged for the typewriter to do that and thumped it out patiently. Why, it's actually a *feuilleton!*"

She held up the extra sheet, which began with some gibberish, described as "Fog Conversation Records," and then launched into thrilling fiction entitled—

THE PLACE OF REST.

One day the Pope was sitting in his palace when he heard a great noise. Then he called one of his servants and asked what was the matter. Oh, said the servant, it is only a riot in the street. Ah, said the Pope, I must go and stop that, for I cannot have riots like that. To-day there is a fight at the Colloseum, said the servant, between two gladiators.

Then, said the Pope, I must go and see it. He went and it displeased him very much. That night he went to bed very sad, for his favourite gladiator had been killed. Next morning when his servant came to wake his Grace the door was never unlocked. Later on in the morning they got a ladder and found that he had Died of vexation.

The title is not so obscure as it appears. "The Pope, you see," Hugo explained next morning, "had gone to the Place of Rest."

"When you read Dante, you may think differently," I suggested.

A little later he asked shyly whether I thought Mr. Winkelmann, my excellent publisher, would pay him for the advertisement, "or, at least," he added, "print my next number for me."

I took refuge in encouraging generalities.

Since the second number the *Gazzet* has languished a little, and I was not altogether sorry when Hugo came to me yesterday with a grave face.

"Daddy," he said, "I am in the position of a paper that cannot get enough advertisements. The *Gazzet* is broke."

"*Requiescat in pace!*" I sighed piously, and Hugo, rather puzzled, returned to his engines.

He has built two wonderful new locomotives out of old cocoa-tins and firewood. The noise of hammering is rather worrying, but I bear it gladly. The future of the world lies with the engineer.

LOST IDEALS.

LAST night it seemed, as in a dream,
Between the twilight and the gloom,
The idols of my heart came back
From out the silence of the tomb,
And stretched white, pleading hands to me
Across the gulf of Destiny.

Ideals that, in years long gone,
I set upon an altar high,
And wove around them golden thoughts
That seemed to lift them to the sky.
But, ah, there came an evil day
When broken at my feet they lay!

So, in the garden of my heart,
Where no one, only God, can see,
In nameless graves that lie apart,
I laid my idols tenderly,
And in the place of earthly flowers,
I twined them wreaths of lonely hours.

There, in the silence, they shall sleep;
No sound can reach that resting-place;
Only the beating of my heart
May sometimes wake them for a space.
So in oblivion let them lie—
My idols that I lifted high.

ELEANOR THOMPSON.

NERVES.

By FRED M. WHITE.

REX BRUNELL drummed on the table with carefully polished finger-nails.

"Pinero," he said, "has aptly described a capitalist as a pawnbroker with an imagination. Now, I regard that as essentially true. I have had considerable experience with the fraternity in question, and incidentally I have been ruined by one of them. I can afford to tell you men this now, because I am about to get my own back—and more. I never met a capitalist yet who was not a nervous man, or one blessed with a good digestion. Goldmark is no exception to the rule."

James Goldmark smiled. The great man was entertaining a select circle of friends in his suite of rooms at the Majestic Hotel. There were four of them, all intimates of Rex Brunell, all of them with fingers more or less scarred by contact with high finance.

"A fool and his money are soon parted," Goldmark said cynically. "Brunell was bound to lose his money. It struck me that I might as well have it as anybody else."

A laugh greeted this sally. It was quite characteristic of Goldmark. He grinned behind his glasses, his teeth were taut over the inevitable black cigar. A waiter came into the dining-room and laid a card on the table before Goldmark.

"I'll get you to excuse me one moment," the capitalist said, and vanished.

The smoke-laden air seem to clarify as the door closed upon Goldmark. Three pairs of glittering eager eyes were turned upon Brunell. He waved his hand carelessly.

"Patience," he said. "No explanation is needed. That man was going to make our fortunes. Instead of which he has practically beggared the lot of us. He is not in the least ashamed of himself. He has used us as a blind to deceive others. In a less effete civilisation than ours we should shoot him and pitch his black, attenuated carcase into the Thames. Now we dine with him instead. After all, it is only a question of financial methods. Goldmark adopts them and we don't. Therefore he gets the best of us. Now, I object to be ruined on principle. We all do, in fact. Therefore we are going to adopt *his* methods. I have thought it all out, and that is why we are here to-night. Watch me, play up to my lead, and all will be well. Hush! For the moment let us dissemble."

Goldmark returned to the dining-room again, followed by a dapper little man with a waxed moustache and a wonderfully groomed exterior. He brought the genuine Parisian flavour with him.

"It was not me, but you, that this gentleman wanted to see, Brunell," the financier explained. "The waiter delivered the card to me by mistake. I explained to Dr. Chassier that any friend of yours was a friend of mine. Doctor, a glass of champagne?"

"This is a pleasant surprise," Brunell cried. "Regan and Powell and Hartigan, this is my friend Dr. Chassier, of Paris University. I need not remind you that he is the great authority on the eye. Of his reputation I say nothing, because it speaks for itself. Now, this is kind of you, Chassier. I hope you have not come merely because I mentioned that certain unpleasant symptoms of mine——"

"Well, partly," the doctor admitted with a smile. "The astigmatism you mentioned—nothing serious, of course, but still . . . . I am glad to hear that you have dropped the cigarettes."

"Tobacco is bad in certain circumstances?" Goldmark asked. "Do have a glass of champagne."

The expert began to talk, at first quietly, till he warmed to his subject. It was "shop" of the kind that this neurotic age takes to so kindly. He spoke of the marvels of his branch of surgical science. He had them all quivering before long as to what particular form of ocular weakness they were suffering from. Goldmark sprawled across the table, puffing at his black cigar

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"Ugh! How it gets on one's nerves!" he shuddered. "I hope you chaps won't laugh at me, but those funny little globular discs that come flashing before one's eyes at times——"

"A pawnbroker with an imagination," Brunell murmured. "My dear fellow, I don't feel in the least like laughing. Anything wrong with the eyes—— To think of it! And Chassier told me that I should lose my sight if I didn't chuck the cigarettes."

Goldmark laid down his cigar, gazed at it, and took it up again.

"Of course that is all bosh," he said uneasily.

"By no means, my dear sir," Chassier said gravely. "Cases of smoker's blindness are by no means uncommon. I had one case the other day—a man retired from your Guards. He came to me so far gone that I nearly paralysed him with strychnine. I had to. There were times when he could not rise from his bed. It was a long struggle, but I cured him. Another week later——"

Chassier shrugged his shoulders. The room had suddenly grown strangely silent. Goldmark pitched his cigar into the fireplace. He was pale and anxious; a little bead stood on his forehead.

"You could tell the symptoms at a glance?" he asked. "In my case, for instance?"

The specialist nodded. He crossed the room and touched Goldmark on the forehead and chin with the tips of his long white fingers. The gesture was typically professional. The sleek dark head of the capitalist was turned up to the light as Chassier lifted an eyelid.

"Heavens!" he muttered under his breath. "Man alive, but there is—— Still——"

Goldmark caught the whispered words. They gripped his heart, he was suffocating. The room swam round him, the damp beads broke out on his face like a gentle rain.

"A pawnbroker with an imagination," Brunell repeated.

"Nothing of the sort," Chassier said drily. "There is no imagination here. Monsieur Goldmark, I should like to make a little test. There are certain things—drugs—that I always carry with me. . . . Just a spot or two in a glass of water. No ill effect, I assure you. . . . Merely to exaggerate certain features, so that I may be better able to judge of your—er——"

Goldmark watched the clear yellow drops measured into a champagne glass like a man who dreams.

"Is it as bad as all that?" he asked piteously.

"I have expressed no opinion," Chassier said professionally. "Please to drink this."

When Goldmark came to himself again, he was in a darkened room. He was conscious of the fact that he was still in possession of his sight, much as if he were seeing things under water. Everything was waved and blurred; stagnant things seemed to be in slow motion. In a way his surroundings were familiar; he was in his own arm-chair in his sitting-room at the hotel; he could dimly make out the outline of the table. This gripping paroxysm of fear passed presently; his scattered thoughts were growing coherent. What were they saying about all this in the City?

"Is there anybody here?" he asked.

"I am here," the voice of Chassier responded. "There is nothing to be alarmed about."

"I must have fainted," Goldmark groaned. "What is the matter with my eyes? And where are the others?"

"Well, they went home last night, of course. I asked them to leave me here. Your eyes will be quite normal, say, in a day or two. I had to use belladonna at once. Not a whisper of this has got out, of course. We thought that you would prefer it. But you'll have to cut those cigars off altogether. Another week or two, and you would be beyond my assistance. A *pipe*, now——"

"Never mind that," Goldmark cried. "I gather that I have been here all night. What time is it now?"

"About two o'clock on Wednesday afternoon."

"Good Heavens! I should have been in the City at ten. My people there will think that I have gone mad. Have they been here? Are any inquiries being made?"

"Your secretary called you up, of course. Several other inquiries, as a matter of fact. It seemed to me to be discreet to put them off. You are supposed to be suffering from acute gastritis brought about by eating some impregnated oysters. The people here are under the impression that I am a doctor who was specially summoned to attend you. I have had great financiers in my hands before, therefore I have taken special pains to disguise the truth. If your enemies in the City get hold of this——"

"By Heavens, I should be ruined!" Goldmark groaned. "They'd be at my



"The damp beads broke out on his face like a gentle rain."

throat in a moment. If anything happens to the Santa Anna group of mines just now, I'm done. I may not be able to see, but, by Jove, I can do business! Push my chair over to the telephone, please. I must call up Gregory."

Chassier raised no objection. So long as the patient made no use of his eyes, all would be well. Possibly they might have to be bandaged for a day or two, but, at any rate, they would be saved. Goldmark worried at the handle of the telephone savagely, and the reply came at length.

"Give me 99976 London Wall," he said. "What? Oh, yes! Is that you, Gregory. Here's a precious nice mess. Something gone wrong with my eyes. What? Told me I was smoking too many cigars. Well, that's just what Dr. Chassier, of Paris, says. Lucky thing for me he happened to be in London. I've got to stay in a darkened room for a day or two, though nobody knows it but yourself. Supposed to be suffering from acute gastritis. For Heaven's sake, keep this to yourself! What? *What?* Rather serious this is. I can only just hear what you say. See Razuli as to those mines. You might get 'em up at least two points before closing-time. Keep the game going till Saturday, when that matter over the Mexican concession is settled. Mind I am posted from time to time during the day. And tell everybody that I shall be in the City certain to-morrow."

The slow day dragged on, with frequent calls on the telephone. A nurse appeared presently and brought Goldmark food. She read the City article from *The Times* to him in a clear pleasant voice; she put him to bed in due course, with the intimation that she was close at hand in case he needed anything.

"It's all very good of you, doctor," Goldmark groaned. "You won't find me haggling over your fees when the time comes for payment. What a lucky thing it was that you happened to look up Brunell! Another week, and it would have been too late!"

"Another week, and it would have been too late," Chassier said gravely.

"Well, I am grateful," Goldmark replied. "On the whole, I'm not doing so badly. I never appreciated the telephone as I have done the last two days. Keeps me in constant touch with Gregory. Rather bad instrument, but I can just make out what he says. Odd thing is that he can hear me distinctly."

"A not uncommon peculiarity of telephones," Chassier replied. "Anyway, you can comfort yourself with the assurance that you are making rapid progress towards recovery. When you wake up to-morrow morning, you will be able to make out objects in this room quite distinctly. I shall come and see you before the evening. I have another delicate operation to perform."

The telephone went utterly wrong about five o'clock, and Goldmark grizzled for the rest of the evening. It was quite early when the nurse insisted upon putting Goldmark to bed, followed by the administration of a medicine that filled him with a feeling of sublime contentment. He turned over contentedly and fell asleep. What did all the mines in the world matter to him just then?

A golden bath of sunshine filled the bedroom as Goldmark awoke in the morning. The blind was up as Goldmark turned round with a clear view before him. The queer sensation had gone from his eyes; familiar objects had assumed their proper proportions.

As a matter of fact, there was not one familiar object to be seen. Here was a strange bed in a strange room sparely furnished. On a chair Goldmark's clothes lay neatly folded. Here were his boots and frock coat and top hat together with a change of linen. On the dining table was all that was necessary for the toilette, including one of his own clean collars. Here also was his breakfast flanked by a Thermos flask of hot coffee. On the bed lay a copy of *The Times* as yet unfolded.

In his pyjamas Goldmark sprang from the bed and rushed into the sitting-room. There was nothing there but a table and arm-chair, together with the telephone in the corner. The rest of the house was empty. Down in the basement was the other end of the telephone into which Goldmark had been speaking for the past two days.

Now, what had happened to him? How had those fellows managed it, and why? How had they contrived to move him from the Majestic in the dead of the night and bring him to this desolated house?

Possibly that day's *Times* might throw a light on the darkness. It did.

"THE STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE OF MR. JAMES GOLDMARK."

"Little doubt is now expressed that Mr. Goldmark has been the victim of some accident, or that he has deliberately made away with himself. Since he so mysteriously vanished from the Majestic Hotel on the night of Wednesday last, nothing has been seen or heard of him. Nobody saw him leave the hotel, and no letter has come from

him. It is hardly necessary to say that this remarkable mystery has created something like a panic in the City, especially in the mining market. Taking advantage of Mr. Goldmark's absence, the bears for the last two days have kept up a vigorous attack on the Santa Anna group, so that the stock was quoted yesterday as low as 11¼, after which it suddenly declined to $7\frac{3}{16}$, which price was freely offered by the bears—a striking contrast to the prices of Monday last. Scotland Yard is silent in the matter, and up to the time of going to press has nothing to communicate."

Jabez Goldmark was a man of nerves and imagination, nevertheless he kept his head at that crisis. He shaved, in cold water, without so much as a scratch, and partook of an excellent breakfast. He was so far awake to the situation that he subsequently took his cigar-case from his pocket and lighted one of the big black weeds. He would very much liked to have met Dr. Chassier at that moment. He stifled his regrets as he stepped into a taxi and drove Citywards.

The cool and immaculate Gregory nearly fell off his padded chair as Goldmark strode into his office. The latter poured out a tornado of questions.

"Tell you all about it later on," he said. "Call it one of my little games, if you like. This affair is going to cost over half a million, but it can't be helped. We've got to get those shares back to par again, and a few points over. Please 'phone our bankers to come here at once. I'll give the bears something to chew before four o'clock."

Friday, October 19, 19—, was a day long remembered in the City. The sight of Goldmark, cool and stern and immaculate outside the Stock Exchange, gave the bears cold fits. Then there were excursions and alarums, followed by a battle which lasted



"Gregory nearly fell off his padded chair."

till three o'clock, and a subsequent flight of the bears, leaving their dead and murdered on the field. Goldmark figured it all out on the back of an old envelope.

"Cost me half a million, all the same," he said. "Only nobody need know that. And it's nobody's business where I have been the last two days. Gregory, ring up Mr. Brunell, and ask him where I can conveniently see him this evening."

"That's all right, sir," Gregory said a few minutes later. "Mr. Brunell will be very pleased to see you at his rooms to dinner this evening at eight o'clock."

Goldmark nodded his approval. At eight o'clock he strode into Brunell's room, to find himself confronted by Regan and Powell and Hartigan, as well as his host.

"I should like," he said quietly—"I should like a little explanation."

"Only natural," Brunell said politely. "I ordered dinner for 8.15 on purpose. We are not going to quarrel over this matter, my dear sir. And you are quite at liberty to make it public if you like. But, unless I am greatly mistaken, you will do nothing of the kind. The last thing in the world you want is for people to laugh at you. Now, you robbed me quite in the way of business, and no doubt enjoyed it. Anyway, I didn't. So I decided to fight you with your own weapons. It seemed to me that if it came to scheming, I could scheme as well as you can. That is why I invented a double for Dr. Chassier, and very well he acted his part. He came on the scene in the most natural manner in the world, and he frightened you very nearly to death. As I am fond of saying, a financier is a pawnbroker with an imagination. You have a most vivid imagination, and I played on it. When the sham Chassier gave you those drops to take, he drugged you. 'Chassier' had a room at the hotel close to yours, and we carried you there. You were placed in a big packing-case and smuggled over to Charing Cross, whence you were fetched to the house where the comedy was played out. Hartigan, who is great at theatricals, acted the part of your nurse. We had only to keep you quiet for a day or two, and the thing was done. As you may imagine, your disappearance created the wildest excitement. All sorts of things were said. You had committed suicide, you had absconded, you could not face your creditors. Your mines hardly needed the efforts of the bears to send them down with a bump. At the lowest point we all bought steadily. We knew that by to-day everything would be up again, and we bought till we could buy nc longer. No, you are not going to teach us a lesson, as that flash in your eyes indicates, because we have unloaded already. By the way, how are your eyes feeling? Quite all right again?"

"You are a clever lot!" Goldmark sneered.

"I flatter myself that we are," Brunell said coolly. "That little artistic touch as to the telephone was quite smart. Gave you a telephone, and you could be more or less content. Regan fitted the 'phone, and added a few thicknesses of flannel over the transmitter so as to deaden the voice of Powell, who successfully played the part of your man Gregory. All the time you thought that everything was going well, Gregory was in a cold bath of perspiration over your disappearance. We got our knowledge of the drug business from a doctor whom we carefully pumped for information. I put the belladonna in your eyes, and the sham Chassier—whom you do not know even by sight, though he is one of your victims—administered the sleeping draught that put you all right again. Now, you must admit that all this is infinitely more artistic and civilised than taking you by the scruff of the neck and giving you the thrashing that you so richly deserve, Goldmark. We have got our own back, and a lot more. We have fined you half a million, and, so far as we are concerned, we are quite prepared to let bygones be bygones. What do you say?"

"I could get you five years if I liked!" Goldmark muttered.

"Precisely. The facts are beyond dispute. But are you going to do it? Are you going to let the whole world know how delightfully you have been fooled?"

Goldmark capitulated at discretion.

"Let us go in to dinner," he suggested.

"By all means," Brunell smiled. "Pawnbroker with an imagination, proceed. I've got some special cigars for you to try presently—very strong, but, in the circumstances, I know you won't mind *that*."

FROM "THE PLUME OF FEATHERS."

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

II. TO BE HUNG IN CHAINS.

THERE came a good rally of neighbours to "The Plume" one Saturday night when the snow was on the ground. A cruel winter we was having, and hunger, like an armed man, had broke into many a house. By middle of February the heath ponies were down in the valleys, and they had to fight for a living even there; but up 'pon the moors 'twas death for all created things to be abroad. Blizzard followed blizzard, and not till May was far spent did the snows melt from the northern faces of the hills.

That night at the inn, owing to an accident, the talk slipped back to old times and the things that our fathers had told us. But 'twas a matter of yesterday that started it. Samuel Bonus happed to be vicar's churchwarden, and he mentioned how, the day before, he'd found three men asleep in the church porch. Tramps all, and they'd got in there out of the weather; and Sam reckoned that if he hadn't found 'em there—going after dark to hang a notice against the wall—they'd have died afore morning, because it was twenty degrees of frost at the least, and the poor devils hadn't enough clothes to make a decent suit among 'em.

And that reminded old Harry Hawke, one of our widow-men, touching a thing that fell out long afore.

"'Twas in the Reverend Valletort's time," said Harry, "and my grandfather was his churchwarden, same as Bonus here be our vicar's now. But the Reverend Valletort was one of them very gentle, trusting men—more angel than man, you might say. Goodness beamed out of his face, so saintly of countenance was he; and I've heard my grandfather say that if his holy surplice had turned into wings, and he'd flown off on 'em through the church window to heaven, not a soul would have felt any great astonishment about it. Too much faith, however, could be proved against him. He wasn't stern enough with the evil-doer, and to the last he spoke and thought doubtfully about eternal punishment. The gentle heart of the man rebelled against the burning lake, and he was far too hopeful. And that's as dangerous as t'other thing. Us don't want the pit of darkness rammed down our throats in every sermon, but 'tisn't right to shirk it and forget there is such a place. And sometimes the Reverend Valletort got a sharp reminder that the Evil One's still loose and busy as a bee, and finds plenty of time to have a look at Dartymoor also, on his wicked way to and from the towns. As your old father used to say, Gregory Snow: 'The Dowl be cruel busy at Plymouth half his time, and 'tis clear enough he goes and comes by way of Dartymoor.' And the best startler as Parson Valletort ever got was from my grandfather. Tramps used to sleep a lot in the church at that time, because the reverend would leave it open always; and one fine morning old Daniel Hawke hasted to the vicarage and cried to see parson, and told him how a man had very clearly spent a good bit of the night in the Squire's pew. The vicar smiled, like the good angel he was, and said to grandfather—

"'Why for not, Mr. Hawke? Could the poor fellow do better than sleep in his Father's house?'

"'Perhaps not, your reverence,' says the churchwarden; 'but 'twill pain you to know the poor fellow's took our candlesticks from the Table and drunk the holy wine to the last drop!' The candlesticks, you see, was solid silver, and put there as a momentum in honour of Squire Bassett's dead lady; and when Squire come to hear about it, he drove over to see parson, and, I believe, hit out pretty straight from the shoulder. Be it as 'twill, the church was locked up after that, and no doubt the Reverend Valletort took a sadder and a truer view of what homeless and hungry human nature can sink to."

"They Valletorts was a fine race," said Farmer Mumford, "and my family's always been mixed up with 'em for generations,

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because Four Acres is theirs; but we've rented it, father and son, for very near two hundred year. 'Twas a Mumford helped them out of the great fix of their lives, when a Valletort was up afore the justices and sentenced to be hanged for sheep-stealing. I can't mind all the facts, but my great-uncle Charles was the very man, and he made a fine tale of it to his dying day, I believe."

Then, knowing well that there wasn't a story worth telling in the countryside but innkeeper Rowland had it at his fingers' ends, I spoke to him.

"Dost call home the tale, Johnny?" I asked him, and he answered—

"Aye, Tom Turtle, I know the matter very well, though Farmer Jim here's forgot it, seemingly."

"If 'tis worth telling, I'll thank you to rehearse it all through," said farmer; "for I'd be very glad to come by the facts, as they was relations of mine, you see. Of course, I was only a little nipper when my great-uncle died."

And Harry Hawke pressed for the story, too, and so did I, and so did Moses Butt, our silent partner.

"Tell it out, neighbour," he says. And Johnny laughed and obeyed at once.

"Four words from Butt be worth the weight of four hundred from any other man," declared Johnny, "and if he wants the yarn, he shall have it."

Whereon, finding himself the centre of attention—which very seldom happened—Moses rose to the occasion and spoke two more words.

"Drinks round!" he said.

'Twasn't often he stood treat, but Rowland didn't give him time to change his mind, and the eight of us in company soon had what we wanted. Then, after we'd all drunk Butt's very good health, Johnny told his tale.

"'Tis an old saying that good parsons do often get bad sons, though I wouldn't like to think there was much truth in it. No doubt a tight hand be kept on the boys of a clergyman; and so, when they escape the home rule, they break out a bit and go wilder and hotter at life than the young chaps who have always had a measure of liberty. But, let that be as it will, there's no doubt that this here Parson Valletort's second son was a handful, and far more than his gentle father could manage. Leslie Valletort was his name, and he favoured his mother, who was a Somerset, and proud and stiff-necked and kin with the highest quality. The young chap lived for sport, and ran exceeding wild. Without any question he did some wrong things, and let his great strength and prowess and high spirits get the better of him. He was a man of his hands, and the first Devon wrestler in the land. Indeed, 'tis said that he wrestled afore George III. in London.

"But there wasn't no ballast to his mind, though plenty to his body, and he became the prey of loose men and very near broke his father's heart. His elder brother was a soldier, and he went at Master Leslie to mend his ways; and, of course, his reverend father did all that he could.

"A comely, flaxen man, with curly hair and blue eyes and his father's good heart; but thereto was joined a weak head and an obstinate will, and the headstrong courage and rash valour of his mother's stock on the Somerset side. If he'd had a bit of their pride as well, it might have saved him; but he didn't know the meaning of the word, and would as soon have neighboured with a highwayman as a bishop.

"Times was rough then—a good bit rougher than now—and the Law, as be gone so weak nowadays, and would go weaker still if some of the people had their way, was still a pretty grim terror to the evil-doer. They hanged a man for stealing a sheep, and often enough, not content with that, the dead wretch would be strung up in chains, for a warning to all malefactors to mend their ways and make their peace and turn from the wrath to come. When a man had to be hanged in chains, you must know, the smith was called upon to make an iron cage for the dead; and into this the corpse was thrust, and then 'twas fastened to a gallows tree, and set high above the heads of the people in a public place. There it would be left, in all the hideousness of death, till the fowls of the air had plucked the flesh off the sinner's carcase and his bones had dropped through the bars of the cage to the earth.

"That was the gashly way they made a dead sinner preach to the living, and turned the gallows into the pulpit. And our grandfathers saw it, and many the mother of an evil-doer have come within sight of madness when she have pictured the blessed child of her youth and joy falling abroad thus under the winds of heaven, to be a solemn sign-post afore the sight of the nation.

"You'd not have thought, however, that any son of gentle havage would come within shadow of such an awful end. 'Twas a

punishment held very fit for highwaymen and shop-lifters and cut-purses and thieves in general, but them as fell upon such evil ways seldom came of good stock. 'Tis the sink of the people they spring from, and their blood have coursed for generations through unknown puddles afore it rises to the height of a good murderer or the greatness of a famous rascal. True, a highwayman here and there have been well bred, but 'twas given to Leslie Valletort, as the first man of good station and a high upbringing, with noble connection and a pious clergyman for father, to be brought up for sheep-stealing and proved guilty of the same, and stand disgraced afore his equals and the world.

"It weren't, of course, the common case of a man stealing mutton for a starving wife and childer, as too often happened on Dartymoor in them days, for Master Leslie, who loved danger better than meat and drink, and cared for nothing that lacked its salt of peril, had made a bet with some other blades that he'd put his neck in the hangman's rope, or do that which was the same thing. So he stole a sheep and killed it, and dined his friends upon it, and the story goeth that the mutton was in their mouths and the caper-sauce sailing round the table in a silver boat when the majesty of the Law broke in upon 'em and took young Valletort to his account.

"The startling thing was that he should be treated like a common man, for he went away laughing, and doubted not that when the truth came out, and the robbed farmer was paid for his loss, there would be no more fuss made over the matter; but, instead of that, the justices, as had had the man afore them for riotous conduct thrice afore, thought to strike terror into him. And so they committed him for trial, and he went to the assizes at Exeter; and the judge summed all against him, and the jury, led by a very clever republican tanner to Exeter, who hated birth and had a great dislike of the upper people, brought him in guilty. One other man was tried for the same crime—a chap by name of Jacob Prance—and both he and Valletort were sentenced to be hanged by their necks until they was dead, and then to be lifted up again in chains for the terror of the wicked.

"Of course, there was a pretty good fight made for the young man, and everything was done within the power of the family. But the people were up against their masters very fierce just then, and it looked as if none could shake the Law. The judge—a terrible stern man and an unyielding Radical—would not go back on his sentence, and the nation was busy and very miserable with wars and troubles, and, in a word, the time came for hanging the two sheep-stealers and nothing had been done to prevent it.

"Prance and Valletort were to suffer in front of Exeter Gaol, and then their bodies was to be took to Gibbet Hill, betwixt Tavistock and Lidford on the Dartymoors, to be hung aloft by the high-road so that all other sheep-stealers and men and women in general might see them. And Harry's great-uncle, Charles Hawke, very well remembered old Saul Tucker of Lidford, a blacksmith who had the job of making the cages, and got five sovereigns by it.

"So there it stood, and Parson Valletort, broken down to a shadow by his grief and agony, spent the cruel days on his knees, crying upon Heaven to save his boy; and his lady called all the Somerset blood to her heart, and fought for her offspring against the world, as only a woman or a tigress can. Finding the Law too strong for her, she went behind it and rose above it, in a manner of speaking. She had rare wits and rare pluck, and they was never more needed than then. A woman of fifty or so she might have been, cold and haughty to the world, but proud as a pageant of peacocks, and most steadfastly resolved that it should never be handed down to future ages how a son of hers made shameful end upon the gallows. A thousand times rather would she have heard that he'd destroyed himself, and 'tis known that when she took her farewell of him, she put a poison ring in his hand—a family heirloom won out of Italy by a Somerset years afore. But that was to be in a last resort, and when the lady kissed her son good-bye, she whispered a good few things in his ear that meant life and not death for him. There was a great deal to tell him at such a moment; but the turnkeys was on her side, for they'd got her gold in their pockets, and they naturally felt that an everlasting farewell between a mother and son might be stretched out a little in common humanity. So on the day afore he was strung up, Leslie Valletort heard an interesting fact or two from his mother. 'Twas neck or nothing, it seemed, and a chance for life yet, though a slender one.

"Yet the Law had its way, as it appeared, for in due course the condemned pair faced the music, stood together in a cart under the gallows, and together was launched into the

life beyond. The people groaned and yelled, and there was a great rumpus; but order was kept, and the bodies were cut down, and the gaol surgeon duly told the crowner's jury that both poor chaps was well and properly hung and dead as hammers.

"Exeter went mad that night, for there came a reaction and a great flare up, no doubt, and plenty of broken heads. Among other things, the mob set fire to the tanner's house—the foreman of the jury that had found Valletort guilty—and they made an effigy of his honour the judge, and burnt it in the Cathedral yard. But the story don't finish here, and next you've got to learn what fell out at dead of night after the execution, far away on the Moor.

"When the folk were gone, a big tilt cart slipped away from the back side of the gaol, and 'twas driven by Nicholas Perry, the carrier. Beside him, in front, rode one of the turnkeys with a loaded musket, and at the back sat two red-coats, also with loaded arms, while inside, on straw, was the bodies of the two hanged men, Valletort and Prance. They were being took by night to Tavistock, to be handed over to the authorities and hung in chains on Gibbet Hill in due course, according to the sentence upon 'em.

"For the rest of the tale I can very well vouch, because Nick Perry, the carrier, was a Dartmoor man, and well remembered by old people in Exeter and Okehampton when I was a lad.

"The death cart went its way at a pretty good trot, and nothing happened to molest 'em; but just near midnight, out 'pon the highway over Whiddon Down, nigh the little village of Zeal, a wayfarer stopped the cart and asked, for the sake of Christian charity, to be took up. He was only a common hump-backed old man, but he made his meaning clear.

"'I be falled dead lame, masters,' he said, 'and I've walked without stopping for twelve hours. I'm on the way to a dying wife at Okehampton, and you'll be doing a very mighty good turn to a sick and sorrowful creature if you'll give me a lift on my way.'

"Perry, he always loved a joke, and there hadn't been much to laugh at that night till then, so he gives the turnkey a nudge in the ribs and makes answer: 'All right, mate,' says he, 'you can climb up over the tail of the cart and lie down on the straw inside. There's two more poor fellows there—sound asleep, I believe. You can lie for a bit alongside of them, if you mind to do so. Don't you wake the poor men. They've been through worse than you.'

"The soldiers saw the joke also, and fell in with it, and gave the lame chap a hand up over the back of the cart. Then they pushed him in atop of the corpses, and on they jogged again. But 'twas very soon plain the traveller didn't like his company. He set up a hugeous yell and bawled out: 'They'm dead! Oh, my stars, they'm dead men!' And then, without waiting for the cart to stop, or 'By your leave' to the soldiers, the chap pushes between 'em, still yelling with fright, and drops to the ground and limps off in the dark so fast as his lame legs can carry him.

"They laughed fit to die at the adventure, and was all in a very good humour still when they got near to Okehampton. And every man amongst 'em felt very wishful to be free of their grim luggage, no doubt. But that happened presently as made 'em stop laughing, for they creamed down their backs and their legs shook and their hair rose. A voice comed from inside the tilt-cart, and Perry shrieked like a good 'un and dropped the reins on his hosses, and nearly had a fit in the turnkey's arms, because a hand stole out from the cart behind him and rested on his shoulder. Dawn was just breaking then.

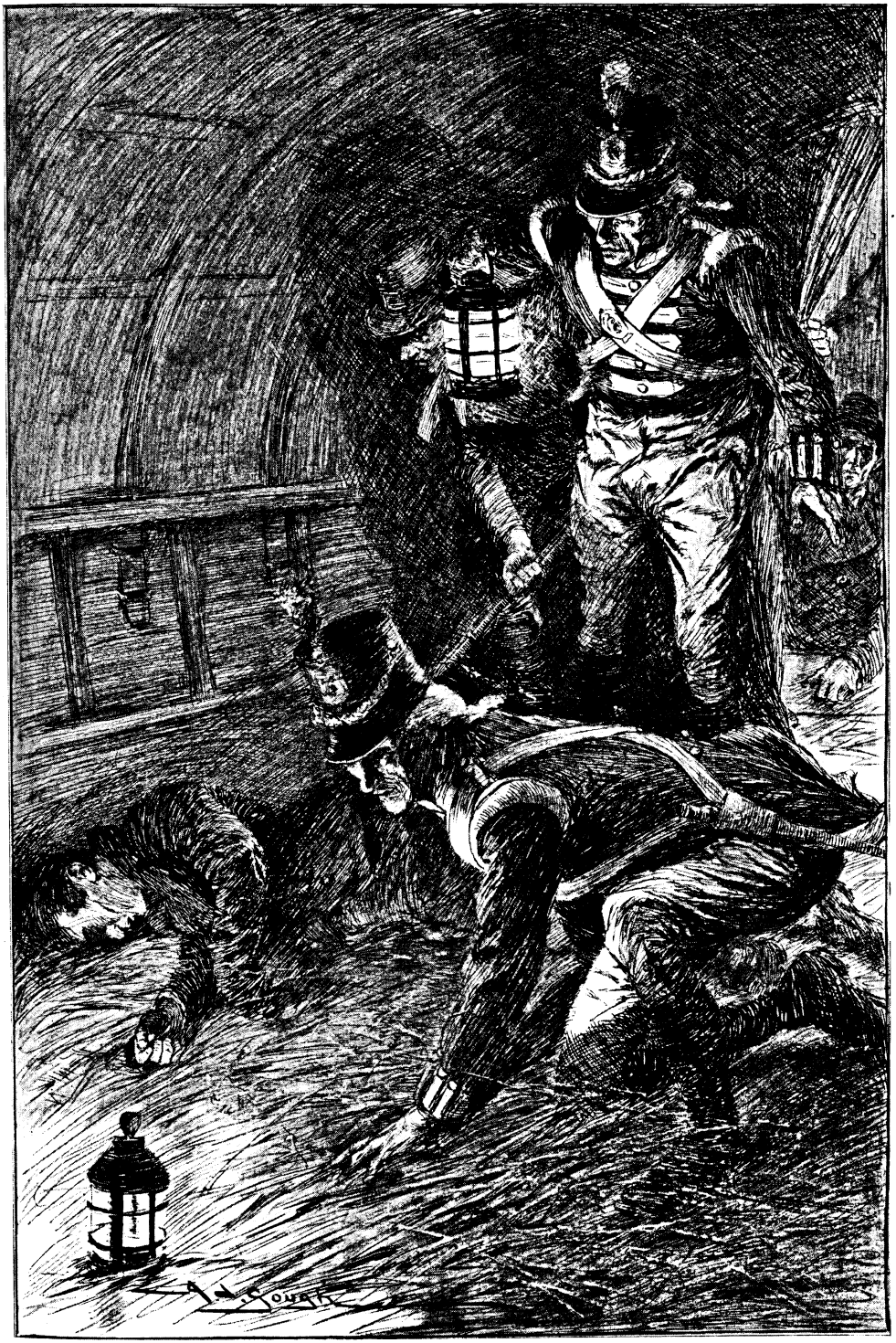
"'Twas the lame chap as they'd picked up, and in the dimpsy light of the morning they could see him clear enough—a grey-bearded man with a hump on his back and his boots in tatters.

"'Guy Fawkes and holy angels!' cries out Nicholas Perry. 'Who the mischief be you, and where d'you come from? Didn't you go in the cart with they dead corpses and then hop out again?'

"'Hop out again? Not me!' says the man. 'I was only too glad to fall in the straw and sleep and rest my weary bones a bit. But now I must be let down, if you please, for here's my destination; and thank you for your charity.'

"'Twas a puzzle, of course, and when they all looked in the cart, the puzzle weren't no less, for only one dead body remained in it. They crowded round and turned over the straw very busy, and lit their lanterns and found the poor hanged man, Jacob Prance, safe enough and still enough; but the rich hanged man, Leslie Valletort, was gone.

"Then they were for laying hold of the humpbacked traveller and taking him prisoner; but while they had been talking and hunting for the vanished corpse, he'd made hisself scarce. The peep o' day was



'Found the poor hanged man, Jacob Prance, safe enough and still enough; but the rich hanged man, Leslie Valletort, was gone."

just silvering Okehampton street, and the house-faces glimmered under it; but there wasn't one open door nor lighted window—only the silent empty street with lesser streets leading out to the right and left.

"A very pretty piece of work, and cost a mint of money; but, of course, nobody knowed nothing about the particulars when hue and cry was made; and the hangman swore the rope was right, and the doctor swore young Leslie Valletort was well and truly dead to the best of his knowledge and belief; and the chaps as carried him to the cart swore the same; yet 'twas clear as light that he'd changed places with the traveller and hopped out in the dark 'pon Whiddon Down after the unknown stopped the cart and got in.

"You see, what had happened was this. The condemned man's mother, finding how 'twas, guessed that only bribery and corruption would do the trick, and she paid away half her little fortune for her son's life. To the hangman she went first and asked him if the boy could be saved, and he said that 'twas within reach of his skill to do so. He kept his word, and got two or three hundred pounds by it, 'twas said. A rope, you see, be a very clever thing in the hands of him who lives by it; and such was the hangman's skill that he made a stout collar of the hemp, and so ordered it that the man weren't choked at all, but just hung by his jaw. 'Twas touch and go at that, but young Valletort done his part, and could see his fellow-malefactor, and did the same as him, and appeared to die in a very vigorous and manful fashion. Then the prison doctor popped in as quick as he dared, and his assistant likewise, for the mother had been at 'em both. Some thousands of pounds I believe they had, being of a larned profession and wanting more for their trouble than the executioner. Between 'em all they kept the breath of life in the young fellow, yet to all appearance, when the crowner's jury sat on him, Leslie Valletort was just so dead as Jacob Prance; and the two fellows told off to put him in the cart declared after that he was so cold and so stiff as a stone by that time, though no doubt they knowed better, and was in the secret and had their bit of money with the rest.

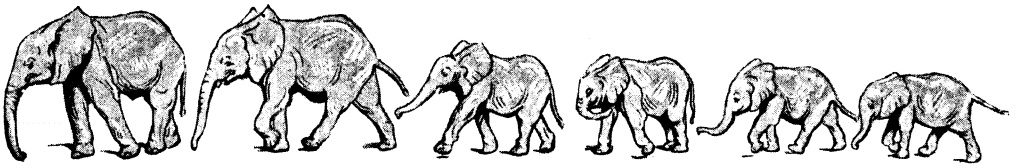
"And then comes in Charley Mumford, Farmer Jim's great-uncle. 'Twas him as waited for the tilt cart and got in it and shouted and made the row; but 'twas not him as jumped out again. Master Leslie never wanted his strength more than on that terrible day, I judge; but thanks to his amazing manhood and the drink of brandy he had from Mumford afore he jumped out of the cart, he got off very clever, and, not a hundred yards away from Whiddon Down, his own mother was waiting for him with her carriage and two fiery hosses. Out of England he went in twenty-four hours from that time, and when the Law come down in all its might and majesty on Parson Valletort, he, good saint, could only assure everybody that he was innocent as the unborn lamb, and knowed nothing whatever about it. Which was the stark truth, for his lady understood him very well and hadn't took him into the secret at all, for fear of the views he might hold upon it.

"'I prayed to the Almighty for my son's life,' said the reverend man, 'and there's no warrant of law against a father's prayer for his erring son; but as to how my petition was answered, or the ministers chosen to effect the Lord's beneficent purpose, I am wholly ignorant.'

"And in ignorance he died, for the shock and excitement was too much for him, and he never lived to hear how Master Leslie joined his soldier-brother along with the valiant Wellington in Spain, and fought very properly under a false name, and was finally forgiven by the State and suffered to come home safe without fear of harm or hurt.

"But the truth never cropped up till the man was on his own death-bed, long after all them who helped his rescue was gone, including his brave mother. And then he told it; and the story formed but a nine days' wonder, for the times were all changed, and nobody cared two straws about things that had falled out so many years before. Indeed, some never believed it at all, and thought the man had given way in his intellects under the shadow of death. But 'twas all true, as you see, and a good enough tale for a winter's night, whether or no."

Another complete story in this series will appear in the February Number, under the title of "A Bargain's a Bargain."



THE SUDAN AS A COLLECTING GROUND

STOCKING THE GIZA ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

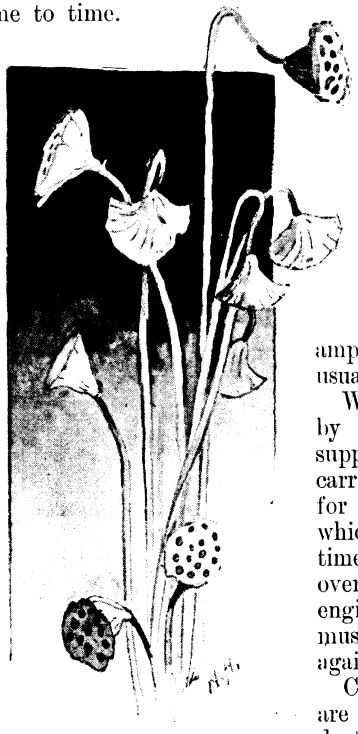
DESCRIBED AND ILLUSTRATED BY
NELLIE HADDEN, F.Z.S.

FEW people, I suppose, realise how much the success of a zoological garden lies in keeping up the stock of animals, which, from one cause or another, would soon diminish if it were not for the fresh supplies added from time to time.

The Director of the Giza Gardens, Cairo, fully realises the importance of this work, and every year sees him organising an expedition to the Sudan to collect wild beasts, birds, and reptiles.

In spite of the difficulties and dangers attendant upon these expeditions, Captain Flower has been eminently successful, and perhaps no one could be found more suited to the task. A born organiser, and possessing both patience and determination, a long experience has taught him the best way of managing. He tells me the difficulties of water transport have been greatly facilitated by the very kind advice and useful help he has received year after year from Commander Bond, R.N., and the other officials of the Sudan Steamer and Boats Department.

In the course of the eleven trips made—ten to Khartoum and further south, and one to Wady Halfa only — Captain Flower has succeeded in bringing a very large number of rare and interesting animals to the Giza Gardens—a remarkable feat when all the difficulties of transport in a tropical country are taken into consideration.



LOTUS CAPSULES.

Acute changes of temperature have to be guarded against. For instance, on October 11, 1907, the Director, travelling, as he usually does, in the truck with the animals, noted a change of 40·75 degrees, the thermometer registering 111·75 Fahrenheit at midday, and falling to 71 degrees at night.

Food supplies of the most varied kind must be provided—often for days ahead. Imagine the difficulties of procuring live insect food for birds and lizards on a railway journey, unless a swarm of locusts is encountered. Travelling by water, an ample supply of cockroaches is usually available.

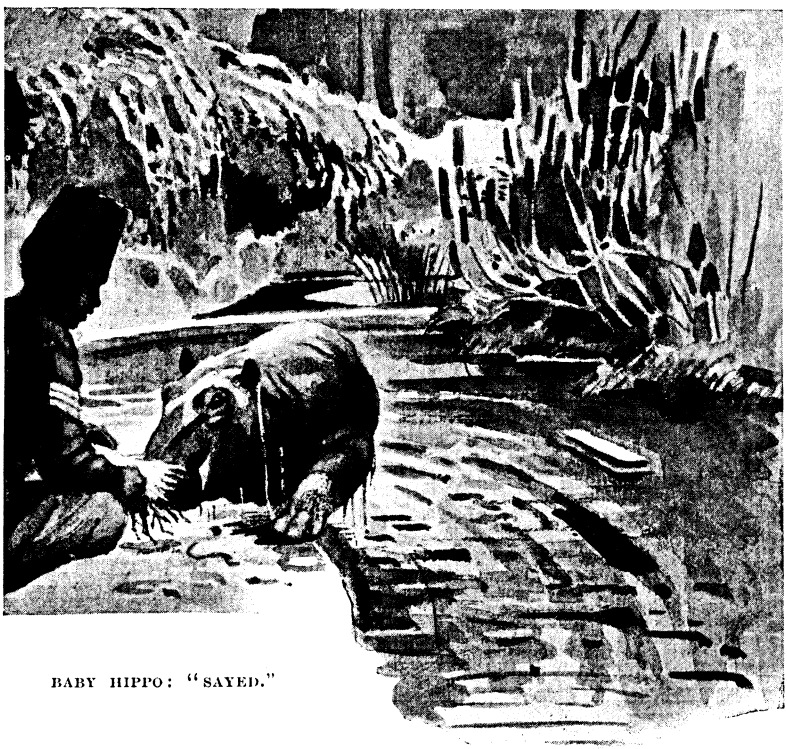
When crossing the desert by goods train, a sufficient supply of water has to be carried for man and beast, also for extinguishing the fires which may break out from time to time owing to an axle overheating or sparks from the engine. This supply of water must be carefully guarded against waste and pilfering.

Causes of more anxiety even are the heavy rain, wind, and dust storms while in a sailing boat or barge with a cargo of wild animals; and in the upper reaches of the Nile the constant rains prevailing are the cause of malarial fever which incapacitates all but the strongest.

Perhaps the collection of 1905 was one of the most interesting, as among the fifty new mammals were the fifteen lion cubs and the

little African elephants which I had the opportunity of sketching after their arrival in Cairo, and among the sixty-four different specimens of birds were the famous shoe-billed or whale-headed storks (*Balæniceps rex Gould*). The Arabic name for this bird is "Abu Markub," *i.e.*, "father of a slipper." The upper mandible does indeed resemble a roomy, hook-pointed form of slipper in common use in the Nile valley.

In reference to this name, some Arab women—visitors to the garden—were heard discussing it, and seemingly expecting to find



BABY HIPPO: "SAYED."

the birds wearing shoes, and were inclined to have their entrance money returned to them on the strength of their disappointment.

In the large paddock in front of the Director's bungalow in the Giza Gardens are these three birds, together with crown and demoiselle cranes and others.

Here, from the garden side, away from the public, I had every opportunity of seeing and studying these strange creatures for hours at a time, and could watch their queer antics, solemn poses, and the way they squat down on their heels. Though I have grouped the birds together in my drawing, they are in reality most unsociable, and keep themselves strictly aloof, maintaining a motionless attitude of contemplation and superiority, belied, however, by their large watchful eyes, which, I am sure, allow no movement to escape them.

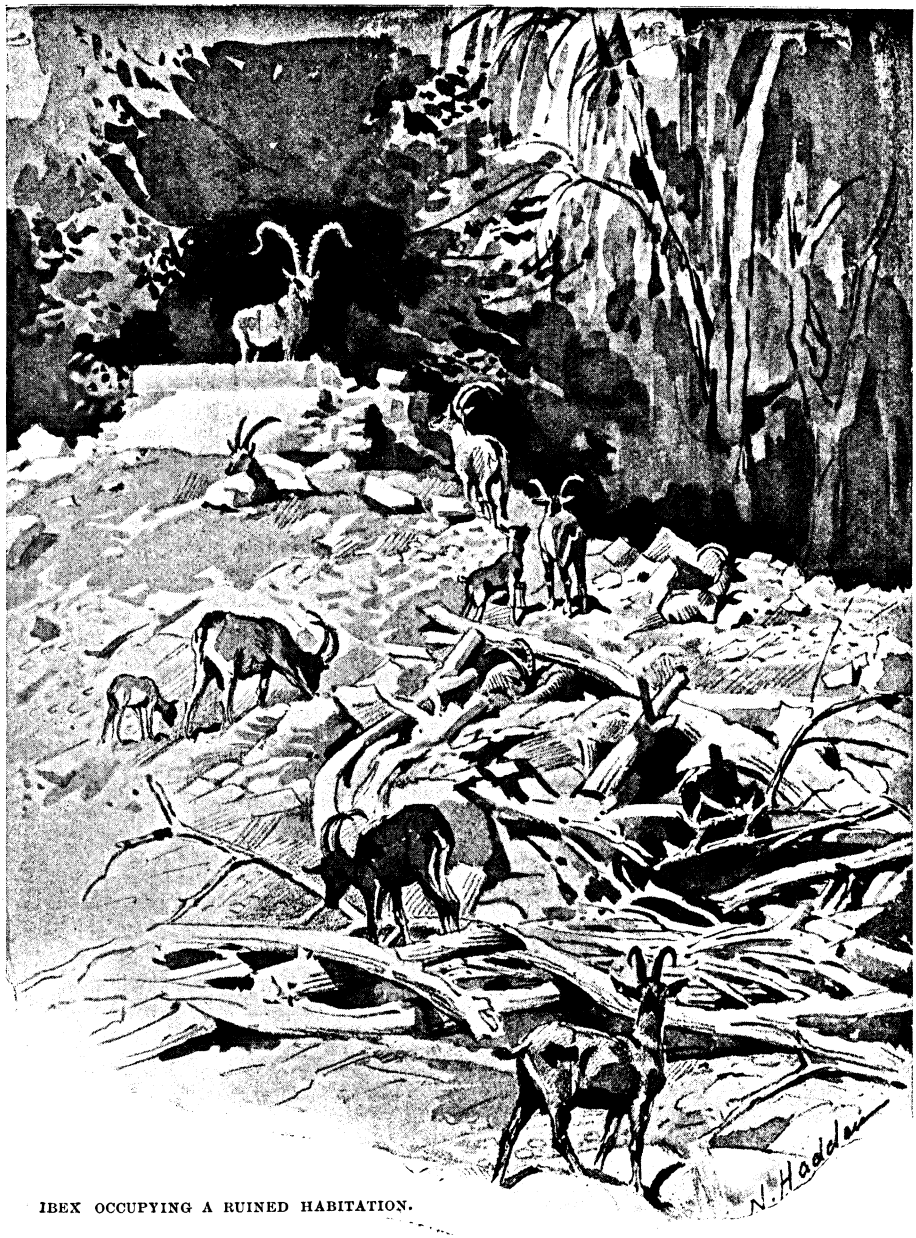
Two of these storks were presented by the late *Bimbashi*, H.I.H. Fell, R.N., May 20, 1902, from the Bahr-El-Djur, in the Bahr-El-Ghazal Province of the Sudan, and one from the same locality presented by Sir R. Slatin Pasha, K.C.M.G., C.B.

In the autumn of 1901, Colonel W. S. Sparkes, C.M.G., brought a live balœniceps from the Bahr-El-Ghazal to Khartoum, where it is still living in the Governor-General's palace gardens. These four are the only specimens known to be living in captivity.

To quote from Captain Flower's report, read at the Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London, December 18, 1900: "It is very curious that while all the other birds here—on Lake Ambadi—never having been shot at, are comparatively tame and easy to approach within fifty yards, the balœniceps is very shy, usually flying off at about three hundred yards or even further, and it was seldom we got a shot at them under two hundred yards, which from a moving steamer is not easy.

"They were generally to be seen singly, sometimes two or three within a score of yards of each other, standing about the edge of the marshes, always in the same attitude. In the motionless way they stand, their solitariness, and their flight, they are more like herons than storks; in fact, at a distance, unless one can see the bill, it is impossible to distinguish them, when on the wing, from the Goliath heron."

In colour these birds are a lovely bloomy



IBEX OCCUPYING A RUINED HABITATION.

grey or lavender. Artists have usually depicted them as standing in the water; but Captain Flower tells me. as far as his experience goes, the shoe-bill is generally seen alone and standing on the edge of the water in swampy country. The individuals at Giza, though provided with a pond and artificially swamped ground, always seem to prefer the driest, sunniest spots in their fine large green paddock, though they dearly love to plunge their great bills into the water and rinse out their mouths, especially after swallowing their meal of fish.

In 1906 I had the chance of seeing six young African elephants all together in the Giza Gardens. These elephants came from the Blue Nile, from about 300 to 350 miles south of Khartoum.

Curiously little seems to be known of the African elephant, which varies greatly, in the different parts of Africa, in the size of its ears, shape of its trunk, etc.; and Captain

Flower tells me that, so far as he is aware, the tusks of the adult elephant of the Blue Nile never reach the gigantic proportions of those found in the districts of the White Nile and of Abyssinia, although the ears are often of huge dimensions.

The original "Jumbo," who was such a well-known character in London, was of a different sub-species of African elephant, and came from the French Sudan.

Three of the baby elephants were brought back by Captain Flower in his expedition to the Blue Nile, 1905, and caused quite a sensation in the Giza Gardens, probably being the first ever seen there, only about half a dozen others being known to exist in the different zoological gardens of the world. These little elephants, from eight to ten months old, were taken out daily and exercised about the grounds; and when, a year later, three more were added to the number, it was a unique sight to see all six animals parading round the garden in single file and headed by the band, and on the return to their house being dismissed with military precision.

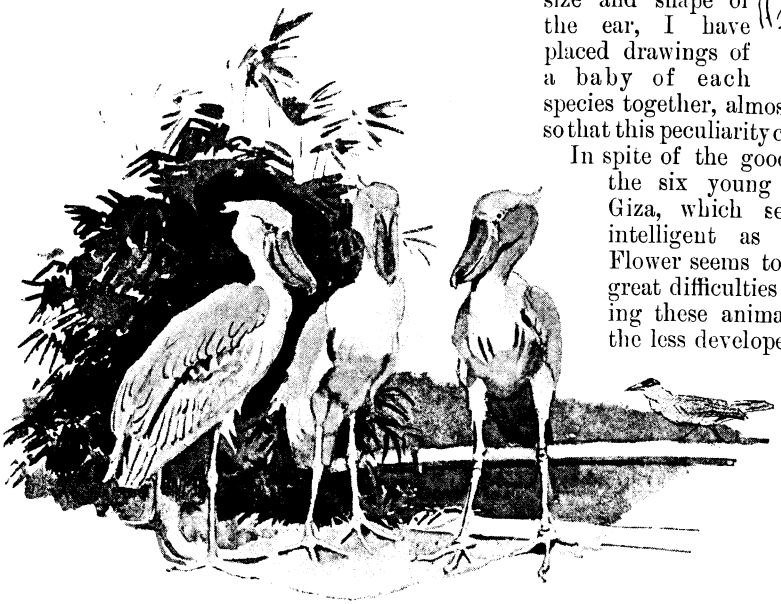
Of course, it took weeks of patient training to overcome the natural timidity of these



YOUNG WATERBUCK, BORN IN THE GIZA GARDENS.

babies and to bring about this finished result; but the advantage of the training became very evident later on, when three of the elephants went to Europe—two of them afterwards taking the longer journey to New York—and the little travellers had to be walked to the station, about two miles from the gardens, to be put on the train for Port Said.

It is an anxious moment when the different animals—all being collected and escorted by



SHOE-BILLED STORKS: WAITING FOR DINNER.

mounted police—leave the sheltering precincts of the gardens and march along the public road for perhaps the first time. I witnessed the start on this occasion, and nothing could have been more orderly than the behaviour of the elephants. In fact, it was a young domestic camel, born at Mena house and brought up with the elephants, which gave trouble, jumping about in the most ungainly fashion and needing much coercion to get it along at all, and afterwards, when the animals were entrained, keeping up the most piteous cries to its stable companions all the way to Port Said.

It seemed quite a pity that this attractive little coterie had to be broken up, but young elephants are costly babies to rear, and their supply of milk alone mounted up to £800 the first year, their other food costing £6 a month; and so they had to be scattered, and I met one of my young friends in Carl Hagenbeck's collection, when I was staying at Hamburg and painting in his wonderful animal park at Stellingen.



"AFTER DINNER REST AWHILE."

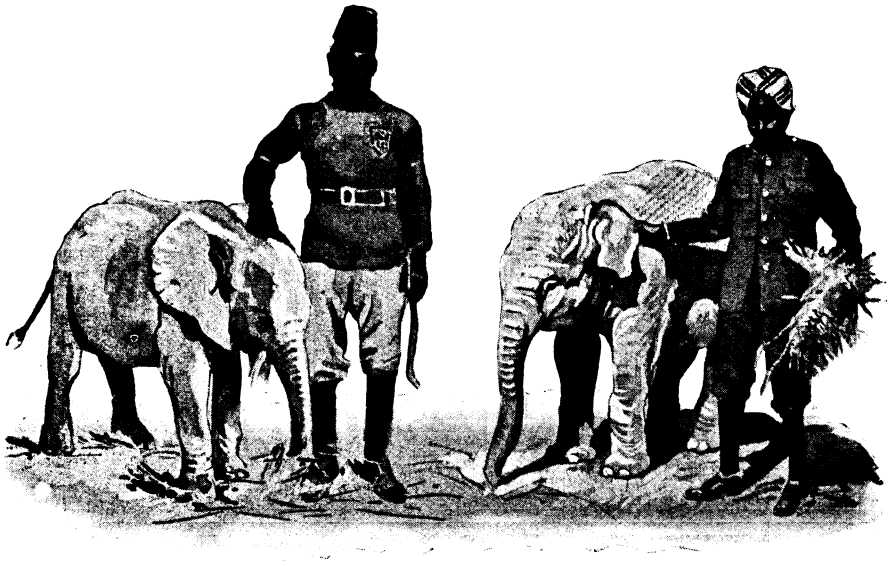
In order to show, among the many divergent points between an African and an Indian elephant, the great difference in the size and shape of the ear, I have placed drawings of a baby of each species together, almost in the same position, so that this peculiarity can be noted at a glance.

In spite of the good results obtained with the six young African elephants at Giza, which seemed as docile and intelligent as Indian ones, Captain Flower seems to think there would be great difficulties in the way of employing these animals, except, perhaps, in the less developed parts of the Sudan.

Large numbers of lions have been exported from the Giza Gardens to various parts of Europe, India, and also to South Africa for the Pretoria Gardens. After Captain Flower's return from his annual trip to the Sudan in 1905, the fifteen young lions captured in all parts of the Sudan by natives, and presented



PUTTING HIS BEST LEG FORWARD.

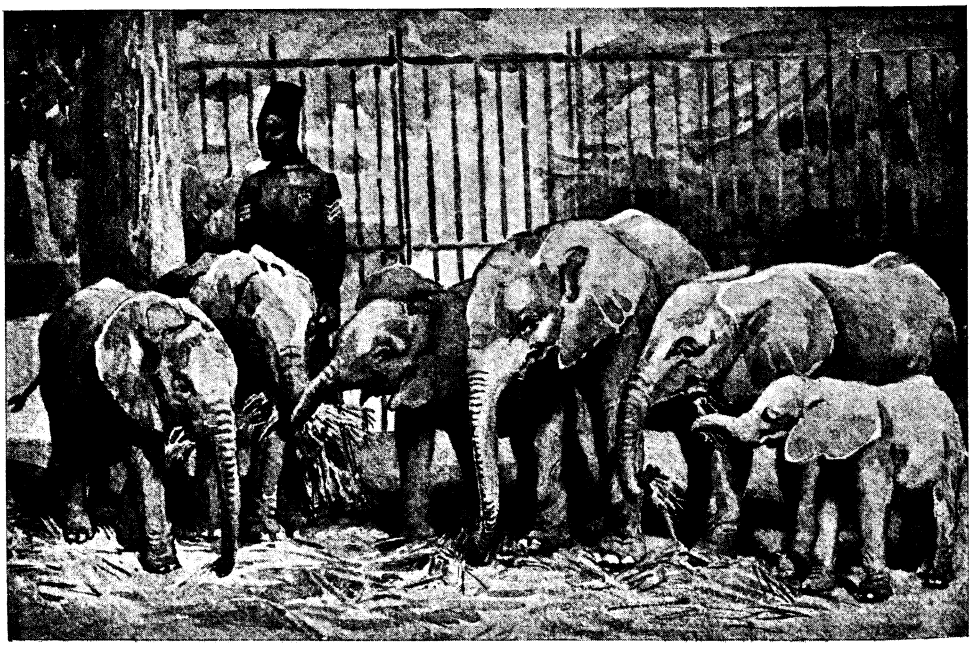


YOUNG ELEPHANTS, AFRICAN AND INDIAN.

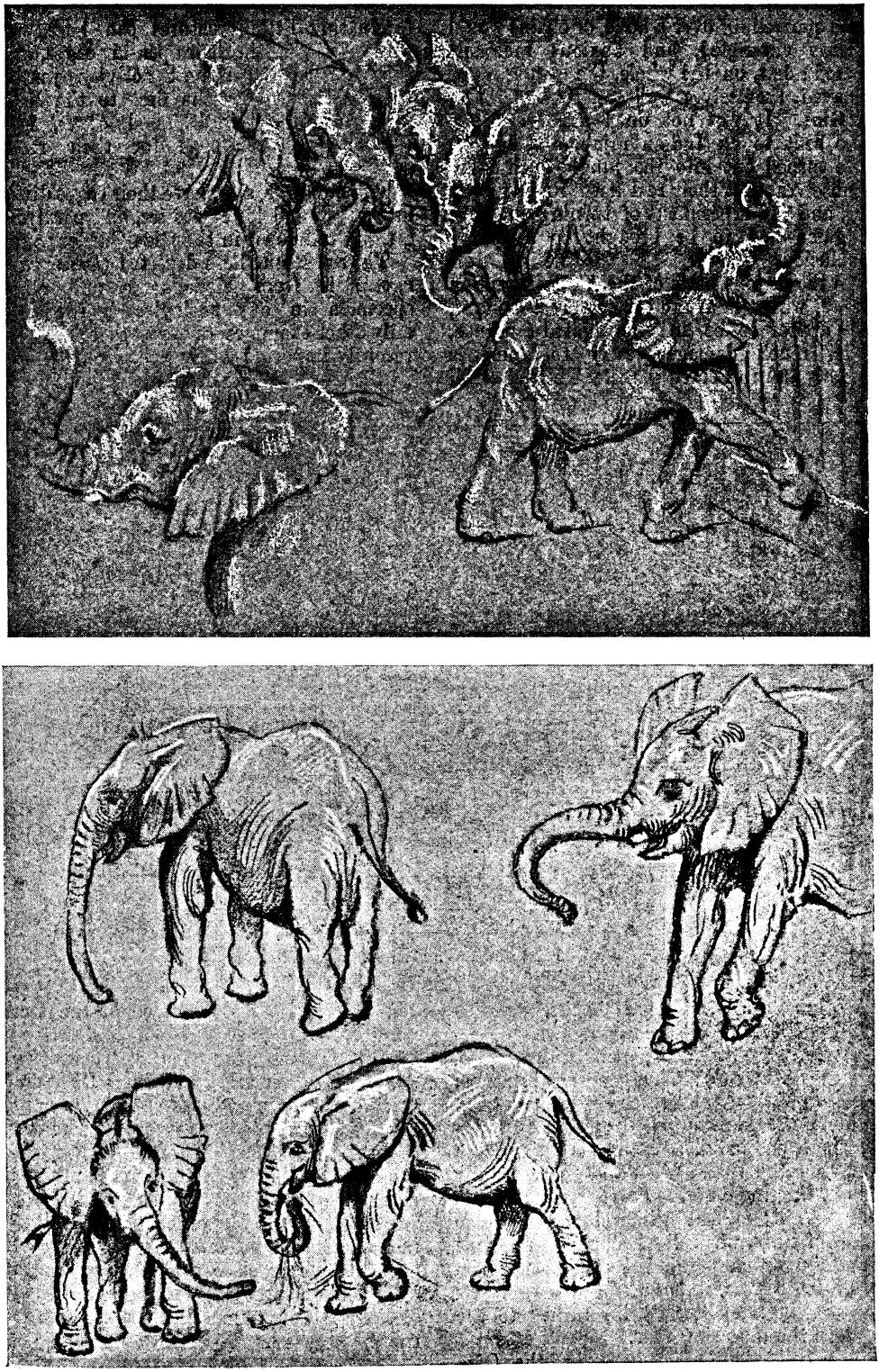
by different Anglo-Egyptian officials, were deposited for a time in the Giza Gardens.

There was some difficulty in accommodating so large a party, but most of the young things being friendly and docile, they were fastened at intervals with collar and chain to a long bench, and it was here I was able to make my drawing "Young Lions by the Dozen." About the size of a large mastiff, and quite as playful as kittens, it was a pretty sight to see the lion cubs, tawny creatures in every possible position, and some with the most winning countenances, purring and looking eagerly for the caress the Director never failed to give as he walked down the row, looking with a sharp eye to the welfare of his favourites.

Sometimes, at feeding time, there would be



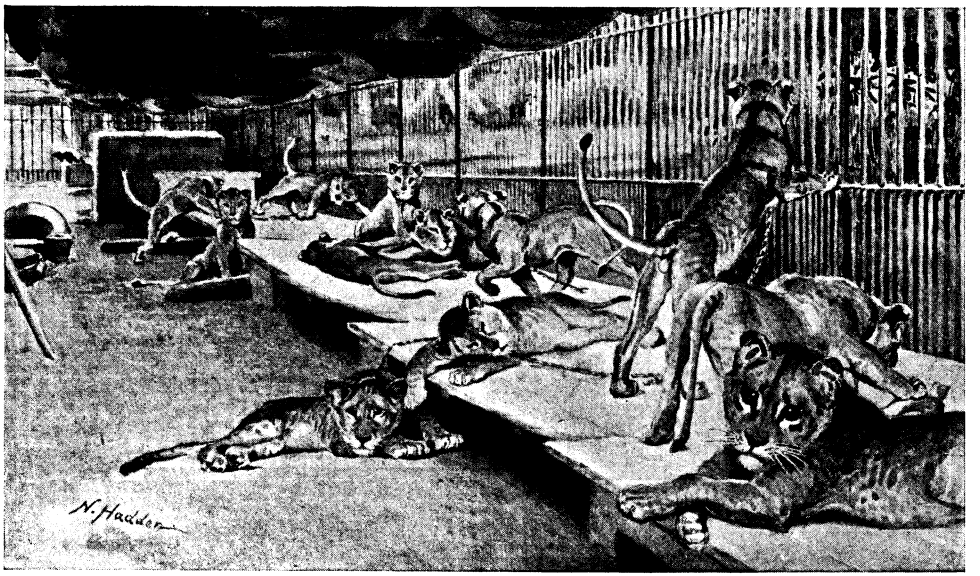
SIX YOUNG AFRICAN ELEPHANTS.



YOUNG AFRICAN ELEPHANTS.

some quarrelling over a bone, or chains would became entangled, and anxious moments ensued; but, on the whole, the young lions behaved themselves well during their stay at Giza. It was not until some of them were sent to an Indian rajah, and by him were turned out into the jungle to shift for themselves, that their real nature made itself felt, and the experiment of turning out lions as game had to be brought to a speedy conclusion.

In the various parts of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, where lions are excessively abundant, they appear to be an unmitigated nuisance, doing much damage yearly to domestic animals and to hoofed game. They also kill



YOUNG LIONS BY THE DOZEN.

many human beings, but as is the case with lives lost through crocodiles, the native headmen seem adverse to reporting these deaths, and the authorities are not generally informed of the lives lost under these circumstances.

Along with the young lions was an interesting new specimen, a Ratal, brought from Renk, on the White Nile, and presented by Mr. L. Gorringe, of the Slave Trade Department. This animal, which belongs to the badger family, was full of character, and had quite a personality, and I was greatly disappointed to find it had gone to the "happy hunting grounds" when I returned to the gardens the following year.

The collection of lemurs in the Giza Gardens is very varied and striking. These fascinating little creatures can be seen to great advantage in their open-air cages, where they display the utmost activity, jumping up and down from the first to the second story of their well-planned cages, which allow plenty of scope for their restless activity.

The monkeys, also, have their cages divided into upper and lower stories, and paralysis is a thing unknown in the Giza Gardens.

The red lemur here depicted (*lemur varius ruber*) is from Madagascar, and a rare specimen in any zoological gardens, the only other examples—unless others have been recently imported—being the one belonging to the Hon. Walter Rothschild, deposited in Regent's Park, and the two in the Berlin Gardens.

The ordinary form of this species (*lemur varius*) is black and white, and the pair at Giza will ever stand out in my memory as having a wonderful power of utterance for their size. Often at night, if anything startled them, they would give vent to the most violent language, which seemed to be the signal for all the other birds and beasts in the gardens to break forth into sound, until the whole place was in an uproar, and one woke up to wonder dreamily what stealthy midnight marauder was causing all the disturbance.

The fine pair of Sudan ostriches which I had the opportunity of sketching this

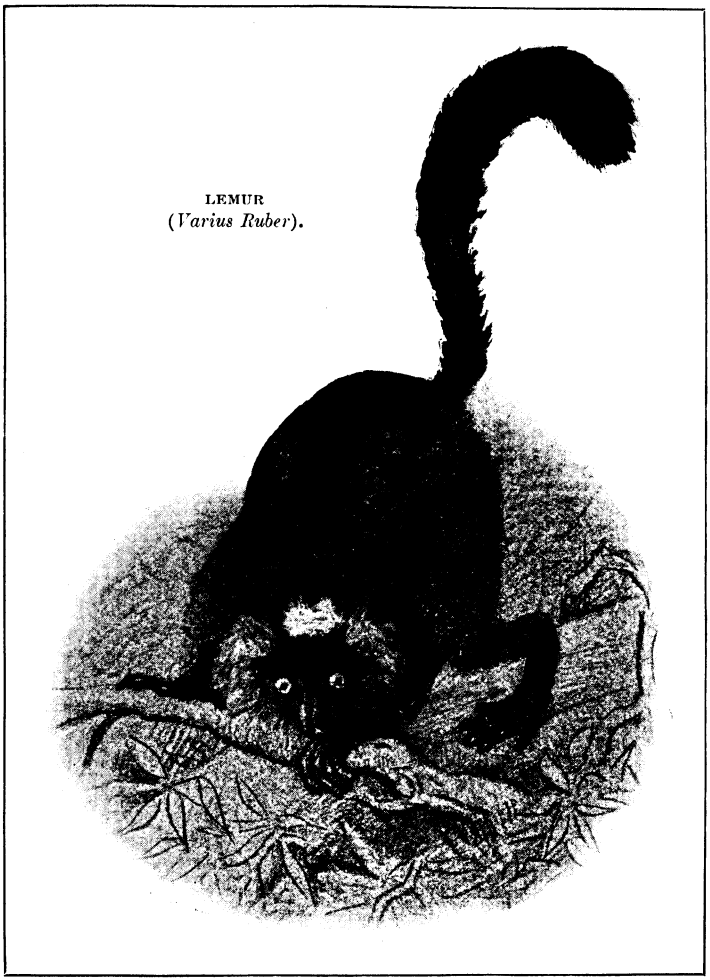
year, with their eggs, are interesting as being the oldest inhabitants of the Giza menagerie, having been purchased soon after the Giza Gardens were started in 1891. They are particularly fine birds, probably without their equal in captivity, and excite astonishment and admiration among the visitors, especially those hailing from South Africa, accustomed to the smaller and more insignificant ostrich from that country.

There are a large variety of ostriches in different parts of Africa, the best known being the Sudan ostrich, the Somali ostrich, and the South African ostrich. They differ in size, in the presence or absence of a white collar of feathers on the neck, and in the colour of the skin of their necks and legs, etc.

The male bird of the pair here depicted, besides his fine coat of sable plumes, the wings and tail feathers being white, rejoices in a white ruff around his rose-coloured neck, and legs of the same sanguine hue. In spite of his fine feathers, I noticed he was of a timid disposition and entirely henpecked, and when the keeper threw in a fresh supply of *berseen*, hovered respectfully in the background until his lady had eaten her fill.

When I started painting, there were several eggs, and every other day I found a fresh egg, and went on adding to my drawing, until I got tired of putting in more eggs, and left the nest full at twenty. I heard afterwards that as many as thirty were laid.

The female bird was most careful of her eggs, and turned them duly every day, sprinkling a little sand with her bill on each egg. A shower of rain seemed to puzzle her and put her out very much, and, I fear, may have prevented the successful hatching out of the eggs, as, though so many were laid, neither bird showed signs of wanting to sit, and three or four eggs at least were broken by the trampling of the hen's huge feet upon them.

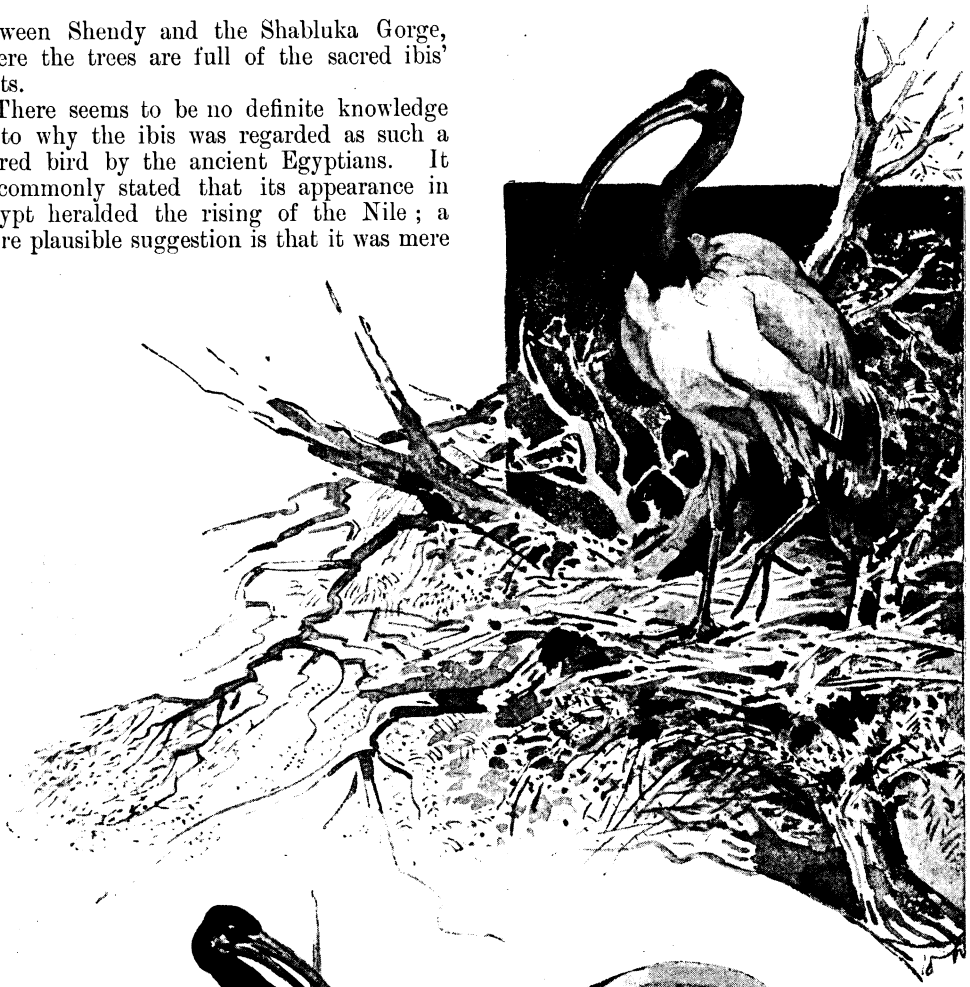


LEMUR
(*Varius Ruber*).

The sacred ibis, of which there is a fine specimen at Giza, is not now found in the wild state in Egypt; in fact, it is very doubtful if it ever was indigenous to Egypt, though quite a common bird in many parts of Africa, from the sea-coast northward, and very numerous in many parts of the Sudan. Captain Flower tells me that he personally has been unable so far to obtain any unassailable evidence of the ibis having ever occurred in Egypt in the wild state. The most northerly breeding-places that he personally has seen are on the rocky islands

between Shendy and the Shabluka Gorge, where the trees are full of the sacred ibis' nests.

There seems to be no definite knowledge as to why the ibis was regarded as such a sacred bird by the ancient Egyptians. It is commonly stated that its appearance in Egypt heralded the rising of the Nile; a more plausible suggestion is that it was mere





SACRED IBIS.



CARTOUCHE OF THOTHMES I., DER EL BAHRI.

coincidence of name that made the bird revered. "Ibis" may have formed part of



SUDAN OSTRICHES.

the name of a god or some sacred attribute, and, as in the case of other "sacred" animals of the Ancients, been for this reason revered.

One can imagine that an Egyptian official of old, when being sent on a mission to the Sudan, would make special efforts to secure and bring back to his king or priest a bird with a name similar to that of one of his deities. The very fact of the ibis being difficult to obtain alive may have enhanced its value in the eyes of the Egyptians. Be that as it may, it is certain that this bird was regarded as sacred, and figures largely on the hiero-glyphics on temple and tomb.

AN ARROW THROUGH A HEART.

By COSMO HAMILTON.

AUTUMN had the world in her golden hands. Everywhere the leaves were red and golden. Everything, still in the full flush of beauty, was waiting, not without anxiety, for the first cold snap. Everywhere youth was over. Maturity, verging upon the sere and yellow, still beautiful, caught the eye on all sides. The October sun came thinly through the haze, and every blade of grass was still tipped with its diamond. Roses still sat with dignity and almost pathetic disregard to time on their trees, but late autumn flowers stared scornfully at them from their beds, and under the eaves of the old house the swifts' nests were empty. The wily sparrow popped in and out of them, and the place no longer echoed with the shrill merry shriek of swallows and martins.

If youth was over outside the old house, inside, in its large airy morning-room, youth, in the form of a very pretty girl, was in command.

This very pretty girl was Enid Chilworth, daughter of the Chilworth who shot and fished over the places known to and loved by a long line of Chilworths; and if he was a credit to his ancestors, she, Enid, this very pretty girl, was a credit to her father.

She was seated at the writing-table, dashing off a letter. She wrote swiftly, in a large, strong handwriting. The letter was short. She blotted it with a bang, thrust it into an envelope, addressed it, jumped up, ran to the window that was open, and gave a sharp whistle.

A tall man made on big lines, grizzled but wearing well, a typical English soldier, who had served his country away from it, and been the plaything of climates, entered quietly. He heard the whistle, saw the girl beckon eagerly, and threw his eye admiringly over the charming form. With a smile he tip-toed across the room and stood with his back to the welcome fire, and started to load a well-tried pipe from a small silver tobacco-box. Hawkhurst was the man—Dick Hawkhurst—known to the British public as Colonel Sir Richard Hawkhurst.

"Jack!" called Enid, and again "Jack!"

Jack, whoever he was, must have sprinted from some distance at a speed which would have done him well in his college sports.

"I say, Jack"—the girl lowered her voice slightly—"I can't come for half an hour. Isn't it rot? . . . What? . . . I know I did, but father's got to see his agent, and has told me off to keep the Colonel and Mrs. Allingham amused until he's free. Frightfully sorry. And look here, it isn't for you to look surly. What price me? The Colonel's a darling, and Mrs. Allingham's the sweetest thing on earth, but I never know what to say to old people. What? Aren't they? Oh, well, they seem old to me!" She laughed.

At the mention of the word "old," Hawkhurst had drawn himself up and raised his wiry eyebrows. "I agree with Jack, my child," he said. "The Colonel and Mrs. Allingham—the one a darling and the other the sweetest thing on earth—are not old. Sensible young man, Jack."

When Enid turned, her face was a study in expressions. "Oh," she said, "you heard!"

Hawkhurst guided his finger under a rather large moustache, stood squarely on wide-apart feet, and held his head high in order to do away with any suspicion of a double chin. "Mrs. Allingham and I," he said sternly, though with a smile, "are *not* old people."

"I'm awfully sorry."

"Old people!"

"I'm most awf'ly——"

"'Shun!" said the soldier. "Twenty paces to the front—march!"

The twentieth pace brought this very pretty girl within two feet of the man in front of the fire. "Please forgive me!" she said.

Hawkhurst put his hands on her shoulders, "Old people, are we? . . . By Jove, how history repeats itself! When I had the run of this dear old place twenty-two—twenty-

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three—good Heavens, it's twenty-five years ago!—I remember being asked by your father, then in the spring of his life, like you, to stay in this very room, at this identical hour, and keep some of your grandfather's guests amused, as you've been asked to do. There were three of 'em, all fine, strong, upstanding fellows like me. And I thought that they were old—antediluvian, and I funked it as you do. *Now* I know that they were not only not old, not even autumnal, but were enjoying their St. Martin's summer as I am. Will you withdraw your libellous remark?"

Enid ran her eyes over the tall man who towered above her.

"Consider it scratched," she said. "I'll never say that you're old again, and I won't even think it."

"Then you can go, and leave me to amuse Mrs. Allingham till your father's free."

"Don't you want me to stay?" asked Enid.

"I want you to stay very much; I want to renew our friendship."

"Renew?" The girl was quite unable to disguise her astonishment. "Did you know me, then, all those years ago?"

"Certainly I did."

"But twenty-five years ago I wasn't born!"

"Perfectly right," said Hawkhurst. "But I'm a friend of the family, and I knew you some years before you were born. Do you want that letter posted?"

"I was going to ask Jack."

Hawkhurst took the letter and went over to the open window. "Jack," he said, "get on your bicycle and drop this letter in the wall twenty yards to the left of the south lodge, please." He threw out the letter. "And, Jack, Enid has no further use for you for half an hour."

"Revenge!" cried Enid with a laugh.

Hawkhurst returned. "Do you mind my pipe?"

"I'll light it for you," said Enid. She did so.

"Thanks." Hawkhurst sent forth a large cloud of smoke. "You're going to be useful as well as amusing, eh?"

"Ash-tray, matches, and *Morning Post*," said Enid, placing them on the table which stood near the arm of a very comfortable chair.

"I never read the paper," said Hawkhurst.

"But you've been reading it."

"No, I was looking at the head-lines and hurrying on." He put out his hand and gently guided the girl into the arm-chair. "That's your place. And now I'll tell you something. Last night, on my way down, I drew a picture of you in my mind."

Enid's golden head looked very well against the red leather of the chair. "Am I like it?"

"Exactly, except for the face. *Yours* is like my picture, but better. You have your mother's eyes, your father's nose, your mother's ears, and your father's tongue."

"But I said that I was sorry," said Enid.

"You've nothing to be sorry about. Your father has the gift of saying things that win all hearts. I know, because when he was ten and I was nine, he called me a silly ass. I punched his head, and we've been pals ever since."

Enid showed two lines of pearls. "Where was that?" she said.

"Here," said Hawkhurst.

"Father's often told me that you spent all your holidays here."

Hawkhurst looked round affectionately. "Dear old place! It's just the same. The trees are older, the bricks are warmer, and you're here, but it's none the worse for that."

"Oh, thank you!" said Enid.

Hawkhurst sailed on. "Yes, all my holidays were spent here. Great times, my dear—great times. I know every inch and every stone. I was on speaking terms with every dog, horse, cow, pig, cat, rabbit, and bird. I've shot over the covers and skated on the lake, sweated on the tennis court, galloped over the turf."

"Bird's-nested?"

"In every tree and hedge."

"Ratted?"

"In every barn and ditch."

"Fished?"

"Every inch of the stream."

"Prigged peaches?"

Hawkhurst made a noise with his tongue. "Heaps of times."

"Lain awake for the ghost?"

The soldier lowered his voice. "And shivered under the bed-clothes."

"Then," said Enid, "you did everything."

"Every blessed thing and something else. Are you on speaking terms with the beech tree which stands three hundred yards from the bridge?"

"With initials carved on it?"

"And underneath them a heart pierced with an arrow?"

"*You* carved them?" cried the girl.

"Alone I did it," said Hawkhurst—"three

weeks before I went with my regiment to India. It was a very fine piece of work. The heart was as big as a pudding."

"And now it's as big as a balloon," said Enid.

"No, no—not as big as that."

"Bigger, I swear it."

Hawkhurst sent out a long low whistle. "Twenty-five years ago! Well, well, I was very badly in love. She was a school friend of your Aunt Hetty's."

"A dear?" asked the girl.

"No, an angel. Not tall, not short—just right. She had hair and a nose, two eyes and a voice, lips, hands, and feet."

"You don't say so!" said Enid. "What an exceptional woman!"

"And I've never met," said Hawkhurst, bringing down his right fist upon his left palm, "any woman in any other part of the world who had any of 'em."

"Good Heavens!" said the girl.

Hawkhurst eyed her for a moment. "Because I've known you all your life," he said, "I don't think there is any reason why you should pull my leg."

"I shouldn't dare," said the girl.

But Hawkhurst warmed again to his subject. "I've never forgotten her. I'm still in love with her. Every time I've come home I've tried to find her. I'm still looking for her. When I find her I shall marry her."

Enid was intensely interested. "But," she said, "suppose, when you do find her, she is greatly altered?"

"She couldn't alter."

"Would you know her at once?"

"Instantly—anywhere."

Enid jumped up. "*Do* tell me!" she said. "Did you propose to her?"

"No," said Hawkhurst. "No money, no pluck, no practice."

Enid was silent for a moment. Although she was very young, she was a woman, and romance seemed to her to be the best thing of all. "She may not have waited for you," she said.

Hawkhurst gave a jump. "Good Heavens," he said, "I'd forgotten that! And, by Jove, I say, we're forgetting Mrs. Allingham! Oughtn't we to be amusing her?"

"I expect she's writing letters," said Enid.

"I don't suppose so," said Hawkhurst. "A woman only writes letters when she wants to get out of an unpleasant engagement. Don't you think we'd better go and find her?"

Enid answered the question by asking another. It has been said that she was a woman. "Do you like her?"

"Very much indeed—immensely. What did you say?"

"I asked you if you liked her."

"Do I like Mrs. Allingham? I dunno, my child. I've never considered the question. I believe I shall. She was late for breakfast, and sat with her back to the light, but the voice was charming. It reminded me of—something. Hanged if I can remember! Let's go and fetch her. Coming?" He stumped out of the room.

"Yes," said Enid. She went to the writing-table, closed her case, turned to follow, and came face to face with Mrs. Allingham. "Oh, here you are!"

"Yes, here I am," said Mrs. Allingham, "as large as life. You've been smoking a pipe."

"I wish I had!" laughed Enid. "It was Sir Richard."

"Of course. What a delicious smell! The smoke of a big man's pipe does more to make a room really comfortable than all the furniture in the world. Where is he?"

"Just gone to look for you."

"For me? Why? Has he remembered"—her voice changed from eagerness to nervousness—"has he remembered that it's rather selfish to leave a fellow-guest to her own devices so soon after breakfast?"

"Yes, he said he thought you ought to be amused. He thinks he's going to like you rather."

Mrs. Allingham laughed. "He won't be able to help himself," she said. "All big men like me—rather. I was going down to the summer-house with a book, but when my left ear suddenly began to burn, I started out to look for Dick."

"Dick?" asked the girl. "Who is Dick?"

"The Dick, Tom, or Harry," said Mrs. Allingham, a little quickly, "who was talking about me. The Colonel and you are old friends, I suppose?"

"No, I don't know him a bit, but he knows me well. He hasn't been here for twenty-five years."

"Twenty-five years?" repeated Mrs. Allingham. Enid thought that she sighed. "Did he say anything about being short-sighted?"

"No," said Enid, "not a word. Is he short-sighted?"

"Most men become short-sighted after twenty-five years." She picked up Hawk-



"'I really believe you think that Mrs. Allingham smokes a pipe!'"

hurst's silver tobacco-box. Good Heavens, this—'R. H. from V. D.'"

"Why," said Enid, "those are the initials carved on the beech tree!"

"How do *you* know?"

"I've known them all my life. Sir Richard was telling me about them just now. He carved them, you know."

"And what did he tell you about V. D., and the heart and the arrow?"

Enid laughed. "Oh, he was very funny," she said.

"Funny?"

"I should think so. He said that she was the only woman who ever had two eyes, a nose, and two feet, in the world."

"Did he? Did he really? How nice of him!" said Mrs. Allingham.

"In fact, he raved about her."

"And yet, from his description, she seems to have been a very ordinary woman."

"But he doesn't think so. He still loves her, and is still looking for her."

"Then why didn't he tell her so when he saw her?"

"He hasn't seen her yet."

"Then he *is* short-sighted."

"I suggested that she may have altered past recognition."

Mrs. Allingham stood very still for a moment, and when she spoke, there was a little break in her voice. "Altered past recognition! And yet it's only twenty-five years!" She suddenly put her hands over her face, and almost as suddenly felt two strong arms round her shoulders.

"Oh, V. D.," whispered the girl, "I'm sorry I said that!"

"It's the truth, my dear—it's the truth," said Mrs. Allingham. "No wonder he's forgotten. The V. D. whose initials he carved, the V. D. whom he loved and whose love he won, the V. D. to whom he never said a word, is the same V. D. in his heart, but no longer the same V. D. in his eyes. He'll never find the V. D. for whom he is looking. Time took her by the hand twenty-five years ago. I don't want him ever to find the V. D. of to-day. Let him live with his dream, and let me live with mine. After all, the arrow has been through the heart for twenty-five years."

Hawkhurst returned, bringing with him the aroma of tobacco.

"There," said Mrs. Allingham, touching Enid's brooch, "I think that's all right now. It would have been a pity to have lost it." She lowered her voice. "Not a word. You promise!"

The girl kissed her. "I promise," she said.

Hawkhurst knocked out his pipe.

"Don't stop smoking for me," said Mrs. Allingham.

"Honestly?"

"There's nothing I like so much as a pipe after breakfast."

"You don't say so," said Hawkhurst.

"I don't mind confessing that I like a pipe all day long."

"Don't you find it rather bad for the teeth?"

"For the teeth? Not a bit. I only draw the line at one sort of pipe."

"The clay?" asked Hawkhurst politely. "What a very queer sort of woman!" he thought.

"Oh, the clay is quite convivial, but I mean the conversational pipe—the pipe that wheezes like a poor old workhouse man."

"I think you're quite right." Hawkhurst looked about him anxiously. "Dash it! What have I done with my tobacco-box? I wouldn't lose it for untold gold!"

Mrs. Allingham held it out. "Is this it?"

"Oh, thanks awf'ly! Er—how do you like that mixture?"

Enid burst out laughing. "I really believe you think that Mrs. Allingham smokes a pipe!" she said.

Hawkhurst turned to Mrs. Allingham. "But don't you?"

"I tried one once," said Mrs. Allingham, "twenty-five years ago, and I've never forgotten it."

"By Jove," said Hawkhurst, "you take a load off my mind!"

From under the window there rose a whistle, soft and seductive.

"That's Jack," said Enid.

"Cut away, my child," said the soldier.

"May I, Mrs. Allingham?"

"Of course, dear; but don't let Jack cut your initials on a tree."

"Why not?"

"It's unlucky."

The girl glanced sympathetically at the two people who had been called old by her, and slipped quietly away.

"Funny thing you should have said that, Mrs. Allingham," said Hawkhurst.

"Oh!"

"I've been thinking that it's an unlucky thing to do, for a long time."

"Did you do it, then?"

"Yes, in this park, twenty-five years ago."

Mrs. Allingham took the chair which had lately held the girl. Here and there her

hair was grey, but it looked very well against the red leather. "Can you remember doing anything so long ago as that?"

"Rather!"

"But why do you think that it was unlucky? Were they—the wrong initials? 'V. D.' may stand for 'Very Dangerous' as well as 'Very Dear.'"

Hawkhurst turned quickly. "How did you know that they were 'V. D.'?"

Mrs. Allingham was also a woman. "I saw them on your tobacco-box, and made a shot at it. Am I right?"

"Quite right. But they stood for Violet Darrell."

"Rather a pretty name."

"It's very nice of you to say that."

"Not at all. Was she—a pretty person?"

"She never was a person," said Hawkhurst gravely.

"I beg your pardon. It is rather a reproach to call a woman a person, isn't it? Almost as bad as calling a man worthy. They both suggest peppermint and cork soles."

And then Hawkhurst made an astounding statement. "As a matter of fact," he said gravely, "V. D. wasn't a woman, either."

Mrs. Allingham showed acute surprise. "What was she, then?"

"The most beautiful girl ever known."

Mrs. Allingham's eyes lit up. "You *were* in luck," she said.

Hawkhurst came to the conclusion that she was a very amiable, sympathetic woman, palpably a woman of intelligence, of humour, who had observed. Oddly enough, he felt that he had known her for a considerable time. There had been very few women to whom he had confided his love-story. Mrs. Allingham deserved to know it. He loaded another pipe and lit it, and turned towards the red leather chair. "I am going to tell you about her," he said.

Nervousness—perhaps it was nervousness—made Mrs. Allingham's eyes blink rather often. "I shouldn't have thought," she said, "that there was anything more to tell."

"Ah, you wouldn't say that if you'd known her."

"I wish I had."

"I wish you had, too. She would have done you good."

"Oh, she was a lady doctor, then?"

"Good Heavens, no!" said Hawkhurst emphatically. "I mean that she was such a dear—such a—such a gay, true, fragrant girl."

"Thank you," said Mrs. Allingham softly.

"Why?" asked Hawkhurst.

"It's good to hear a man say those things about a woman. I thanked you for all the other women. Were you engaged to her?"

"No. No money, you see."

"Was she so mercenary, then?"

"Vi mercenary!" Hawkhurst was very nearly annoyed. He was, at any rate, indignant.

Mrs. Allingham was not quite unangry. "I suppose she could have gone without things for you," she said.

"But a man's wife *must* dress."

"Naturally, unless she and her husband live in a bungalow of bark on a desert island. She could have made her own dresses, I suppose?"

"But my pay didn't run to materials."

Mrs. Allingham made a bold statement. "If a woman really loves a man, she is ready to fight for her dress materials at summer clearance sales."

The soldier shook his head. "I couldn't have asked her to do it, Mrs. Allingham."

"You don't know what you've lost."

"Don't I? Twenty-five years of happiness." Hawkhurst fancied that Mrs. Allingham sighed.

"You went abroad?"

"India, Hong-Kong, South Africa, Egypt."

"And she?"

"Married, so I heard, and went to live in Australia."

"And you never spoke?"

"No."

"So that she wasn't to know that you loved her?"

"Well, I cut our initials in a tree, and carved an arrow through a heart."

"Yes, her heart."

"No, it was to be a sort of joint heart."

Mrs. Allingham let her eyes run over the man—the big, simple, honest man—who was still in some things nothing but a boy. It was true that twenty-five years had fallen away since she had seen him. It was true that his moustache was large and wiry, the lines on his face deep and many, and the hair on his temples almost, if not quite, white. He had earned the right to be called Colonel Sir Richard Hawkhurst. She found in him, however, nothing but Dick, and she realised more and more that indeed she had altered past recognition. "Is she alive?" she asked.

Hawkhurst blazed with anger. "Of course she's alive!" he almost shouted.

"I really beg your pardon, but even the

most beautiful girl ever known hasn't the gift of perpetual life."

"You gave me a shock. I'm sorry I barked like that."

"Not a bit. I like you for barking. Why don't you try and find her?"

"I am trying."

"She may be free."

"Yes, she may be free."

"But suppose that she's forgotten?"

"I refuse to suppose that. It's very kind of you to be so sympathetic."

"Oh, no, not at all! I take it that you'd know her if you saw her?"

"Anywhere, instantly."

Mrs. Allingham smiled. "How very Dickish of Dick!" she thought. "But she won't be the most beautiful girl ever known now," she said.

"I beg your pardon," said Hawkhurst hotly. "She won't have altered a day."

"She really seems to be a very wonderful woman."

"It's very good of you to be so interested."

"The whole thing seems to me to be so—sad."

Hawkhurst screwed up his eyebrows. "Sad?" he echoed.

"Yes, very sad for the girl. Twenty-five years ago you and she loved each other. You never said a word because you thought more of her dresses than her happiness, but she knew that you loved her because you carved her initials on the beech tree and drove an arrow into a heart. It was all very well for you—you had your work and your career, and they filled your life during these twenty-five years—but what of the girl, who waited and waited and waited, with never a word? For years she said: 'To-morrow—there is to-morrow.' But all the to-morrows became to-days, until at last she said: 'Yesterday—it was yesterday.' She watched you in India, Egypt, Hong-Kong, and South Africa. Oh, those black days in South Africa! Up the ladder you went, brave and strong. But 'He has forgotten,' she said, waiting at home. Then *she* had her black days, and met the angel of death upon the threshold, and couldn't prevent him from taking away father and mother. And she was lonely and without a to-morrow, and at last"—her voice broke—"Old Robin Gray came a-courting o' her." Mrs. Allingham bent down and hid her face between her hands.

Hawkhurst stood quite still for a moment, afraid to move. Then he stooped and lifted her up, and stood her in the light so that the sun fell upon her face.

"Vi!" he said.

"Dick!" said Mrs. Allingham.

From beneath the window there rose a duet of youthful laughter. A robin perched upon the window and tried to sing.

"I should have known you anywhere, Vi!"

"So it seems, Dick!"

"You haven't altered a day."

"I'm glad you think so."

"I love you, Vi!"

"Thank you, Dick."

He put his arms round her, and as he kissed her, Old Time, evidently a more sympathetic person than he is given the credit of being, did his best to wipe twenty-five years off the slate.

FIRE AND SHADOW.

WHEN I sit still in the room,
And the fire burns red and blue,
I can see them through the gloom,
Sitting still and quiet, too:
Seven gnomes with peaky caps,
And their hands clasped in their laps.

Though I stare with all my might,
I can't make out, not one bit,
Why they sit there every night
Just before the lamps are lit;
And nobody seems to know
Whence they come or where they go.

Once I crouched upon the mat
In the corner by the wall,
Stared at what they all stared at—
I saw a great big Castle-Hall
And seven Captive Kings, uncrowned,
Painting a Shadow on the ground.

It was long and thin, in shreds
Grey as grey, and wide as wide,
Hung all round with stars on threads
And a gem with flame inside;
And as they painted it, it woke,
And crinkled, and turned into smoke!

AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON.



THE COMPLETE HOST.

HOST: Help yourself, old man.
GUEST: Snuff? No. What the——
HOST: Cotton-wool. Put a bit in your ears; my wife's going to sing!

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

A NEW YEAR'S TOAST.

Well, here's good luck and lots of fun
To you and me and everyone,
And may the year, so new and small,
Bring brighter prospects for us all.

May skaters have their bit of ice,
May breakfast bacon fall in price.
May luck in love be yours and mine,
May Coronation Day be fine.

May each one get a better screw,
With lots of friends, but little "flu."
When there's a "kill," may we be up,
And may the best team win "The Cup."

May future fashions suit us all,
May aviators never fall.
In short, here's luck and lots of fun
To you and me and everyone.

Jessie Pope.

"OH, Johnnie, Johnnie," said his aunt reproachfully, "why is it you never remember to say 'Thank you'?"

"I expect it's 'cause I don't get things given to me often enough to practise," answered the young diplomat hopefully, eyeing a box of chocolates.

IF man saw the present as clearly as he thinks he sees the past and the future, he would be more careful of it.

"HE seems to be an up-to-date politician."

"I should say so. Before proposing to his *fiancée*, he got up a petition with two thousand signatures urging her to accept him."

PHILOSOPHERS AND PHILOSOPHY.

PHILOSOPHY is a short cut to knowledge. Being a short cut to knowledge, philosophy is nothing at all, because there is no short cut to knowledge.

A philosopher is a man who thinks that if he finds out a certain thing which nobody else has ever found out, he will be able to find out everything else without looking. Therefore he spends his life looking for that one certain thing, and thereby overlooks everything else. Accordingly, a perfect philosopher knows nothing at all. Happily, the world has never yet been burdened with a perfect philosopher. There are, however, a good many imperfect philosophers floating around, who are interesting to associate with directly, as they follow philosophy not as a vocation, but as an avocation.



A PERSONAL DEFINITION.

PERSISTENT HECKLER: Wot is raw material?
ORATOR: Well, I should say you were a very fair sample!

"Do you have social relations with their family?"

"No, purely business—we exchange New Year greetings."

"ARE you willing to join us and become a vegetarian?" asked the enthusiast for the cause.

"Yes," said the philosopher, "if you're willing to concede that all flesh is grass."

YAWN, and the world yawns with you; think, and you think alone.

BROWN: Say, old man, you hold everything about a mile away from your eyes. You need glasses.

JONES: Nonsense! What I need are longer arms.

"YOU must have struck it rich, old man. I see you in this taxi-cab every day."

"It isn't that. You see, one night I told the chauffeur to drive me around until I told him to stop. I fell asleep, and when I awoke I had not got enough money to pay his bill. So I've got to keep on riding in it until I die."

THE man who wears the finest clothes is generally the one who would look the worst without them.

MOTHER: Is it possible, Harry, that you have eaten all that cake without giving a thought to your sister?

HARRY: Oh, no! I thought of her every second. I was afraid all the time that she would come before I had eaten it up!

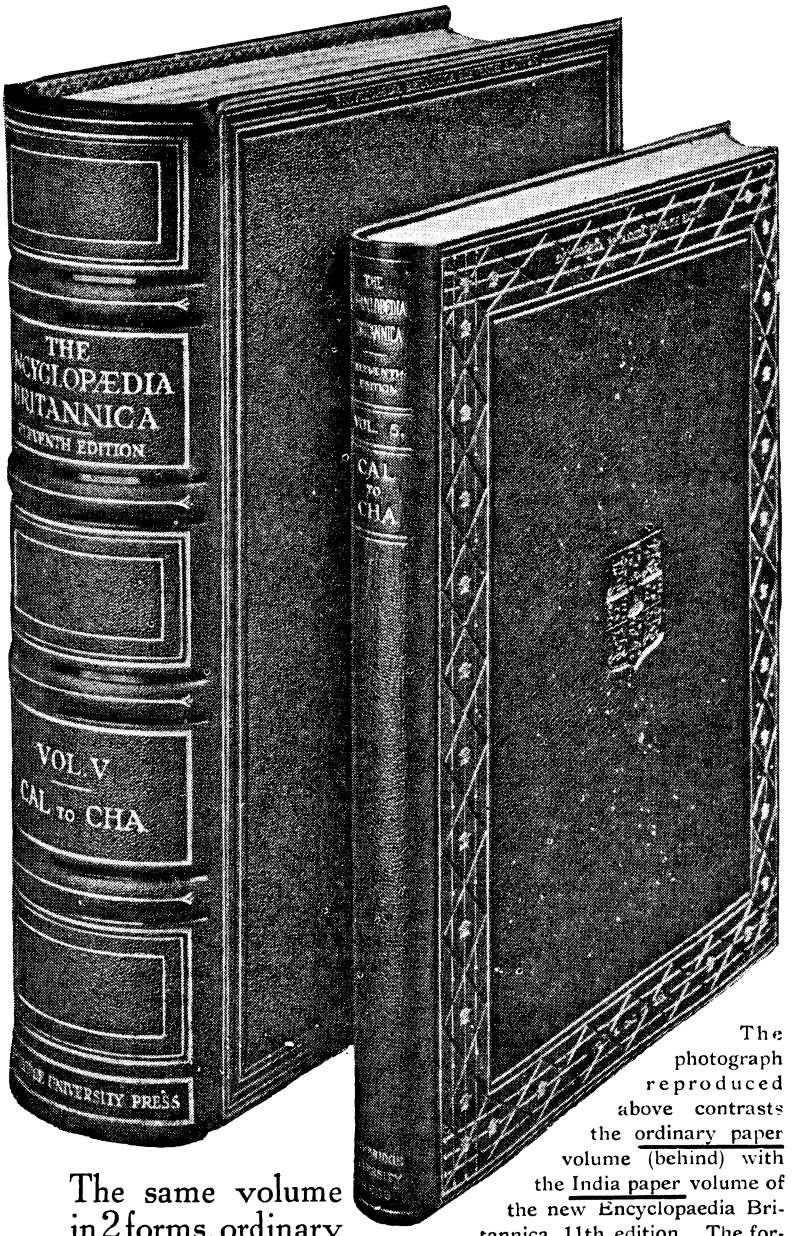
"YOU don't mean to say that you are going back to horses?"

"Temporarily. I have moved to a new country place, and I thought I should like to become acquainted with the scenery."

A revolution in book production: an encyclopaedia on India paper: over 41 million words in a space of 28 inches.

In connexion with the issue, by **The Cambridge University Press**, of a new edition (the 11th) of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, the feature which first strikes the imagination is this purely material one—that its 28,000 pages, its 41 million words, its 7,500 plates, maps and illustrations, its index of 500,000 entries, are brought within the covers of 29 slender volumes, each of which measures barely an inch in thickness.

It may seem unreasonable that this economy of space, as a purely physical feature, should take precedence of others which affect the contents of the new edition—as, for example, *the entirely new character of its information*, the result of a fresh survey of the world, and *the simultaneous and far more systematic manner in which it has been prepared.*



The same volume in 2 forms, ordinary paper and India paper.

The photograph reproduced above contrasts the ordinary paper volume (behind) with the India paper volume of the new Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th edition. The former measures 2¾ inches in thickness and weighs 8 lbs., the latter is 1 inch thick and weighs 3 lbs.

But the merits of its contents require some reflexion to be appreciated, whereas the material improvement strikes the imagination at once, may be grasped, indeed, by whoever glances at the photograph reproduced at the top of this page. It represents volume 5 of the new Encyclopaedia Britannica printed in two forms, the old form and the new, on ordinary book paper and on India paper. The contents in either case are identical. Each book contains 980 pages, printed with the same matter in the same type. Each contains 300 illustrations in the text, and 27 full-page plates and maps. Both are full bound in precisely the same high quality of genuine morocco (goatskin) leather.

But one is 2¾ inches thick and weighs 8 lbs., while the other is 1 inch thick and weighs only 3 lbs. One requires two hands to lift it from its shelf, the other may be taken up between the thumb and forefinger.

One can be read only at a table, the other may be held in one hand by a reader sitting back at his ease. The ordinary paper volume is of necessity bound with stiff covers, and, when opened, will lie flat only after it has been some time in use. The India paper volume will open out, and remain open, the first time it is used—indeed the advantage of its flexible back goes much further, for it permits the reader to double the volume right back, cover to cover, so that the slender quarto book is as easily held in one hand, for convenience of reading, as is an ordinary octavo book or magazine.

The 35 volumes of the 10th edition, it may be remembered, occupied a width of 7 feet and weighed 240 lbs. The 29 volumes of the 11th edition, printed in type of the same size, contain 2 million words more, yet together they weigh but 80 lbs. and occupy a width of only 28 inches. On the score of house room alone, the improvement recommends itself as considerable.

Indeed, it is by no means unreasonable to account this purely material innovation as of prime importance. However meritorious may be the contents of an encyclopaedia, its practical value depends upon the extent to which it is used, and in the past its bulk has proved a serious obstacle to the use of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. No one would have desired to see this obstacle removed at the expense of the characteristics which have given the national work of reference a unique place among books. Better, indeed, an array of cumbrous volumes than that the Encyclopaedia Britannica should fall below its high standard, should fail to afford the reader an exhaustive and authoritative statement in respect of every subject of inquiry. Nevertheless, the possessor of the old Encyclopaedia Britannica certainly thought twice before he referred to a volume which had to be lifted from its shelf with both hands, and a book which was essentially intended for reading, as well as for reference, only partially fulfilled its purpose simply because the volumes were too big and too heavy to read except at a table or desk.

The contents of this new edition, besides being founded upon a fresh survey of the world, shew many improvements which render it an even more useful possession than were its predecessors; but it is in virtue of the material improvement that the Encyclopaedia Britannica will now yield to its possessor the full value of its contents.

The date of the first edition—1768.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica first appeared (3 volumes) in 1768—eight years before the American Colonies declared their independence, and twenty years before the outbreak of the French Revolution. It was a fruit, in fact, of the intellectual movement which produced the great French *Encyclopédie*, ushering in "modern" times and marking, among other things, the close of the days when it was still within the capacity of a cultivated mind to compass practically all that was known. The book first appeared, then, to meet the need of a common resource which should give connected accounts of arts and sciences already promising to outgrow the bounds within which the individual mind could hope to follow them. And the subsequent success of the Encyclopaedia Britannica was a consequence of the fact that, in the coming years, the expansion of knowledge, resulting from the development of specialization, was to proceed at an extraordinary pace. The need of such a book grew as the bounds of knowledge extended ever further beyond individual ken, and it is not surprising that successive editions should have been called for at intervals, on an average, of fourteen years.

The present day.

At the present day the multiplication of special studies has reached a point at which, without such assistance as is afforded by the new Encyclopaedia Britannica, a man must be content to miss the true meaning of nine-tenths of all that he observes and reads. But if accurate knowledge is hard to come by because, to use a childish expression, "there is so much of it," a willingness to be informed, a desire to know, a belief that there is positive gain in knowing, are also characteristics of our generation. It assuredly cannot be described as a failing of our time that the individual, whatever may be the limitations of his *knowledge*, lacks *interest* in many different things, or inclines to underrate the importance of learning or experience which do not lie directly in his path. At no period since the first appearance of the Encyclopaedia Britannica has there been a public readier

to welcome a book which brings together, in one common resource, the results of special studies in every department of knowledge. The reader who recognizes how many points of contact exist between interests the most diverse, will not lightly assert that there is any item, in all the immense mass of ordered information collected in the pages of the new Encyclopaedia Britannica, to which he may not want to refer. Indeed he will value the resource at his disposal precisely because it is inclusive and exhaustive; because its distinguished authors, in endeavouring to make it, indeed, "a complete circle of instruction"—in the sciences and the arts, in history, biography, geography, industries, religions, philosophies, commerce, sports—have been guided by the demands of their subjects, and by no supposed standard of what suffices for an imaginary "average reader."

And the need of such a resource is the more appreciable now, because of the long time—twenty-eight years—that has elapsed since the appearance of the last entirely new edition, the 9th, of which 1882 may be taken as the mean date (the first volume appeared in 1875 and the last in 1889). The lapse, on this occasion, of so long a period is due to the issue, by The Times, of supplementary volumes, which extended the life of the 9th edition beyond the normal term of years. But no such method of "bringing up-to-date" could for long suffice to maintain the value of a book of which the first volume appeared when the present German empire was only four years old; of which one half was written before a single public electric supply station had yet been built in London; of which the last volume was finished before the Trans-Siberian railway was begun, and many years before the discovery of X-Rays, the appearance of the motor car, and the application of electricity to traction. The need of our times is for an entirely new work, conceived and written throughout from a modern standpoint, and such indeed is the 11th edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, for it is founded upon a fresh survey of the world in every department of knowledge.

Simultaneous production.

The reader may perhaps suppose that a new edition could have been made by the comparatively easy method of taking the articles as they stand in the old edition, and distributing them among the best available authorities with the request that new matter should be substituted wherever it was required. And such, indeed, might have been the process had the present edition been created under such conditions as obtained in the preparation of its predecessors. Former editors were doubly hampered—first, by the limitations of their own knowledge; secondly, by the fact that their attention was engrossed, not in planning the work as a whole, but in the preparation of a succession of separate volumes, written, printed, sold at intervals, perhaps, of half a year.

In the present case, the editor gathered round him a permanent staff of men whose university training in various branches of learning brought to the business of editing an encyclopaedia the desired range of knowledge. This staff worked with the nearest approach to the unanimity of a single mind, while keeping in touch, through its individual members, with the thousand and more specialists whose services were enlisted as contributors. Moreover, the work was planned and executed as one consistent whole, and no portion of it was sent to press until practically all the material was assembled from A to Z.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the benefits derived from this novel method of preparation, for the book has gained by the acquisition of all these precious qualities which accompany *system*—well-considered plans consistently carried out.

A low price an essential factor.

In issuing a new edition which is worthy to supersede the old one—worthy in virtue, not only of its new information, but also of its superiority in plan and execution—it is essential that the work be brought within the reach of the widest possible circle of readers. In connexion with a book which sets out to perform a universal service, it is much to be able to say that no effort has been spared to render this service effective. It is much, but not enough. "The new Encyclopaedia Britannica," the reader may say, "is, of course, a desirable thing to have; but is it also a thing *which one can afford to buy?*"

The 9th edition, it will be remembered,

was published at 30s. a volume of 850 pages. The new edition (of which the cost of production has been more than double that of the 9th edition) may be purchased at the rate of 15s. 10d. a volume of 960 pages. As no other book is calculated to appeal in the same universal fashion as does the Encyclopaedia Britannica, the price of the present edition can properly be compared only with that of its predecessors. The ordinary scale of book prices is too different to afford effective ground of comparison, for a volume of the new Encyclopaedia Britannica at 15s. 10d. contains ten times more words than a biography or book of travel, of which the price may be 21s. Upon any such scale, a volume of the Encyclopaedia Britannica might cost 10 guineas. And the difference defies calculation altogether, if any attempt be made to take into consideration also the value of the contents on either side, or the distinction of the authors.

Although the volumes have been prepared, and will be issued, simultaneously, and the subscriber (who has no payment to make until delivery is made) thus at once becomes the possessor of a complete work, he is not called upon to pay the whole price at once. At an increase of but a few shillings, he may distribute the payment of the cash price over a period of four, eight, or twelve months. He may also pay in monthly instalments of 21s.

15s. 10d. a volume at present.

It is but fair, on the other hand, to add at once that the rate of 15s. 10d. a volume is not permanent—refers, indeed, only to those who apply for copies *now, in advance of actual publication.* It represents, in fact, an advantage offered to subscribers who, by promptly applying for copies of the new edition, afford the publishers certain necessary information.

While the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press rate very highly the advantages derived from the employment of India paper, it was not considered advisable, in respect of a historic publication such as is the Encyclopaedia Britannica, completely to abandon the traditional form in which the book has appeared for so many years. An impression, therefore, is also being issued (as the photograph reproduced on the first page of this announcement shews) upon ordinary book paper, such as was used for previous editions.

The issue of the work in two forms, however, creates a considerable problem in its manufacture. What proportions will be required of the India paper and the ordinary paper impressions? The question is a serious one in connexion with the manufacture of a book containing 27,000 quarto pages, for the supply of India paper is limited, its manufacture is a slow process, and its cost—unless orders can be given on a very large scale—such as to make it impossible for the publishers to persist in their present intention of charging only 1s. 2d. a volume more for the India paper than for the ordinary paper impression.

The question is one that could be answered only by experiment, and it was decided, therefore, that immediately the preparation of the book was completed, but before its actual publication, advance applications should be invited, and special terms be offered to those who, by promptly signifying their intention to subscribe, would afford the required data, not only as to the extent to which the India paper and the ordinary paper impressions would find favour, but also as to the proportion of copies required in the six different styles of binding. Meanwhile only a small number of copies was actually put in hand for early delivery to prompt applicants.

Those who, with the prospectus and the specimen pages of the new Encyclopaedia Britannica, have already received a form of advance application, are reminded that *the prices and terms named thereon are necessarily of a temporary nature.* After publication, the price will be raised, and it is intended that the ultimate price of the present edition shall be that of the 9th edition, viz., 30s. a volume. Any reader who has not yet seen the prospectus and specimen pages may obtain them at once if he write his name and address below, tear off this corner, and post to

THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS,
135, FETTER LANE, LONDON, E.C

Name .....

Q

Address .....



A TERRIBLE TUBE TRAGEDY.

THERE was a man of the name of Burst in a certain country town. This would have been of no consequence, but he called his children Ethel May and Ernest Will.

HE was a terribly "short" man, but he knew a real live business woman when he saw her. She was applying for a situation as confidential clerk and typist, and he turned upon her a rapid fire of questions.

"Talk slang?"

"No, sir."

"Know how to spell 'cat' and 'dog' correctly?"

"Yes, sir."

"Use the telephone every other minute?"

"No, sir."

He was thinking of something else to ask her, when she took a hand in the matter and put a few queries.

"Smoke cigars when you're dictating?"

"Why—er—no!" he gasped in astonishment.

"Slam things about when business is bad?"

"No."

"Think you know enough about grammar and punctuation to appreciate a good typist when you get one?"

"I think so."

"Want me to go to work, or is your time worth so little that——"

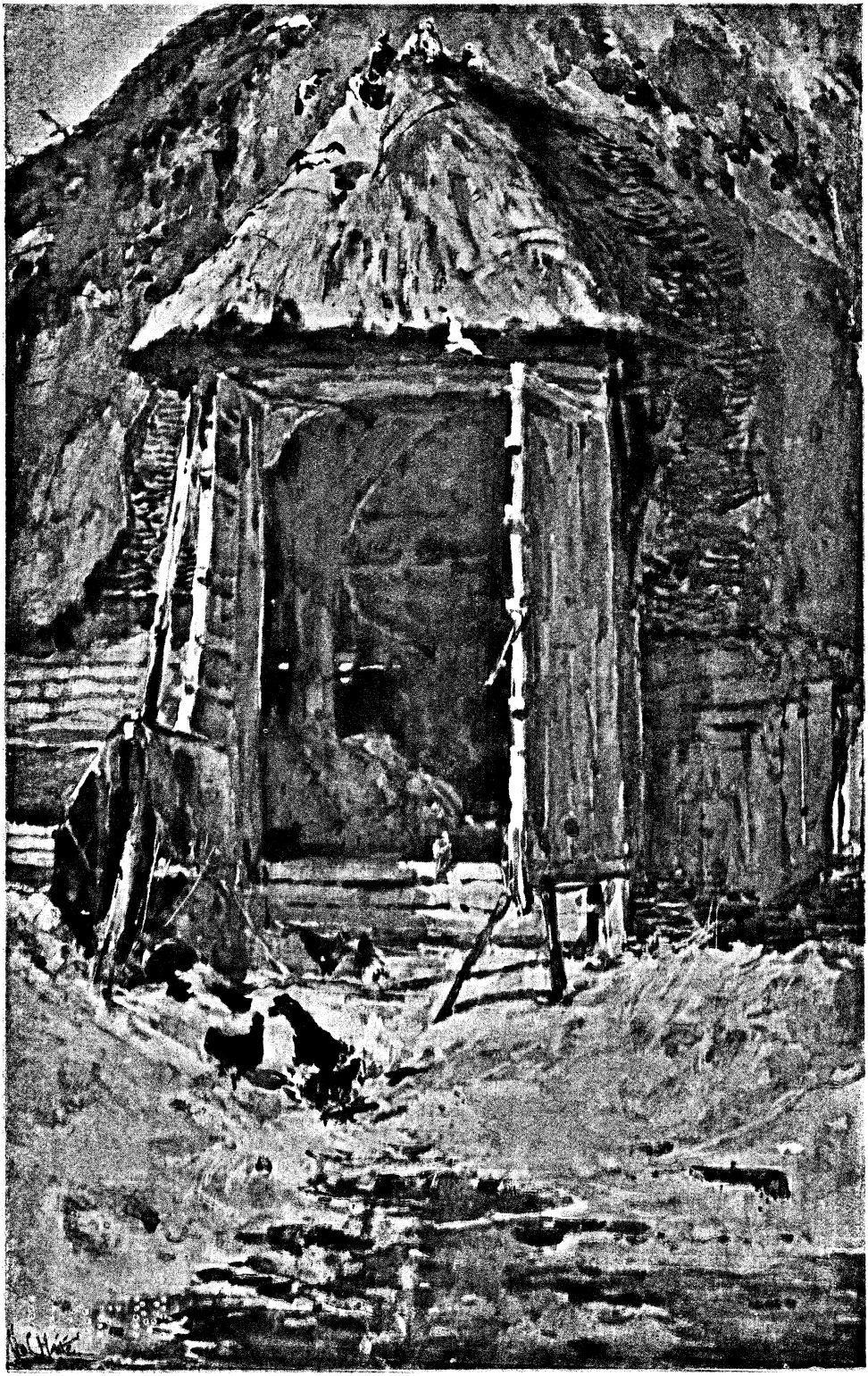
He interrupted her enthusiastically.

"Kindly hang up your things and let's get at these letters."



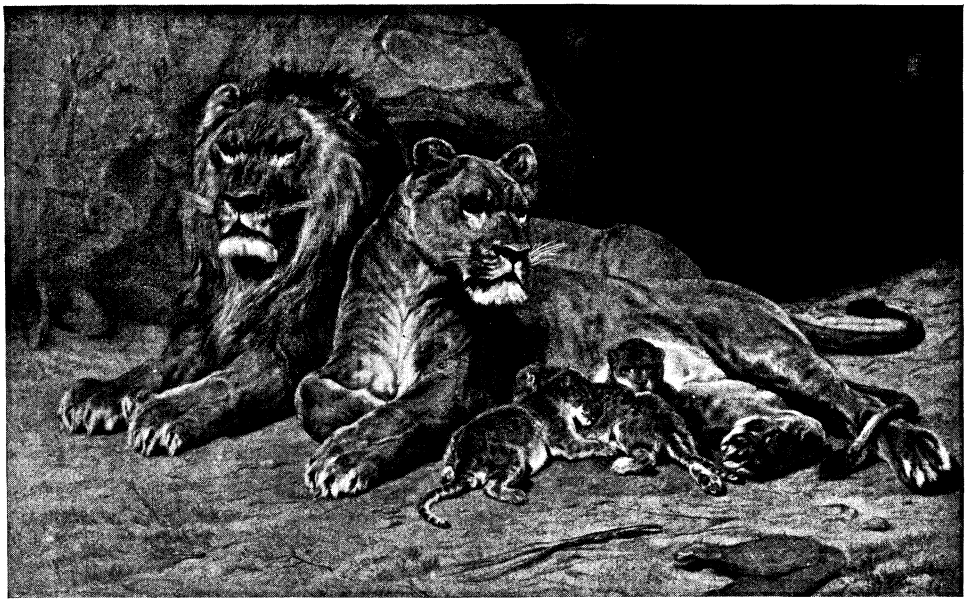
REVERTING TO BARBARISM!

HE: And how are you going to have your body done?
SHE: I think I'll have it enamelled deep purple with gold lines.
(Horror of respectable old lady on opposite seat, who doesn't know that they are only talking about the new car.)



"THE OLD BARN DOOR." BY GEORGE CHARLES HAITË.

From the original water-colour in the City Art Gallery, Leeds, reproduced by permission of the Leeds Corporation.



"THE LION AT HOME." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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THE ART OF ROSA BONHEUR.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

THE year 1830, which brought to France the enforced abdication of Charles X., the brother of Louis XVIII., and the election, in his stead, of the Duke of Orleans, under the name of Louis Philippe, was a year momentous also to the French nation in other than political ways. Called the '93 of the Arts, the romantic revolution was then clearly marked, the work of reform begun. Delacroix, Huet, Isobay, Hugo, Constable, Scott, Byron, were the Barras, Robespierres, and Marats of the Art world. It was a useful movement and lawless. It cleared the air of prejudice and affectation, and just as the Code Napoleon was the product of political upheaval, so official success marked the artistic movement of which Gros was the originator and, curiously enough, Napoleon the inspiration.

It was into the disturbed condition of the Paris of 1830 that Raymond Bonheur migrated from Bordeaux, his native town, hoping, in the capital, to find a lucrative source of income in painting and giving drawing lessons which his birthplace had failed to yield; but here, as was natural in such troubled times, this very distinguished artist of Jewish extraction found it a hard matter to support himself, his wife, and the four young children of an early marriage. Marie Rosalie Bonheur was the eldest of these four children, all afterwards to become artists, and she was eight years old at the time of the family's migration to the capital. Her name of Marie points to Catholic conversion, but the nickname of Rosa Mazeltor, a Hebrew term which turned the surname into its equivalent in that language of "good luck," points to her father being still of the Jewish faith; and certainly, if we are to credit Jacques Wienar, the Belgian medalist, a native of Venloo, he and Raymond Bonheur used to attend the same synagogue.

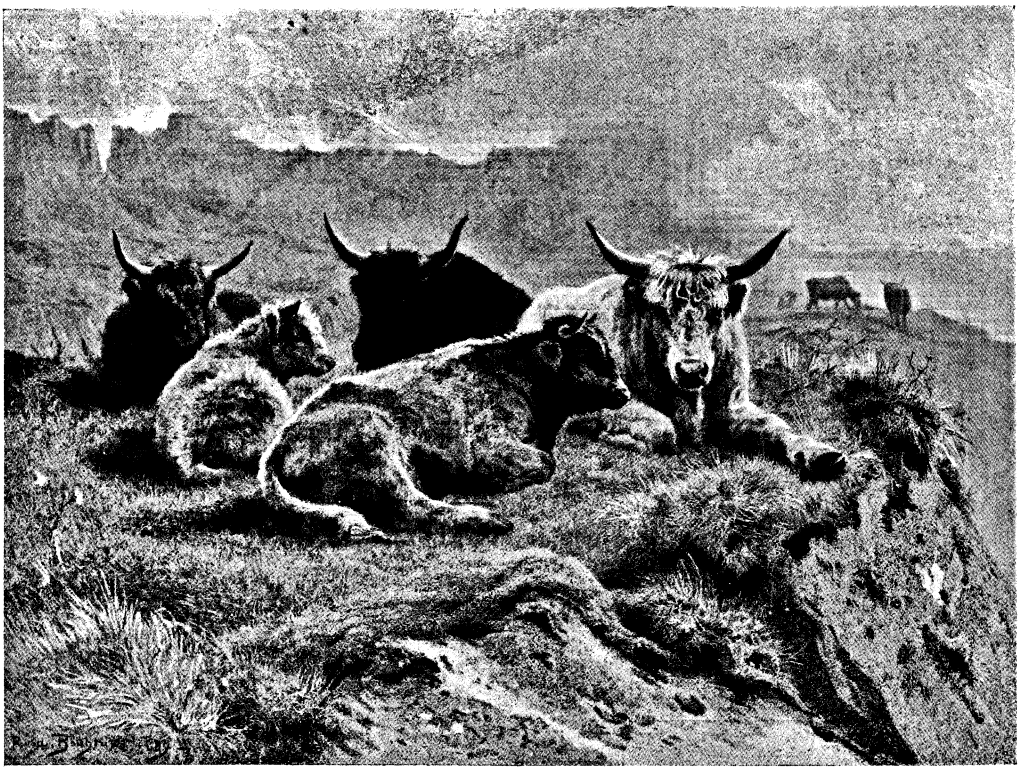
From infancy Rosa seems to have shown a character of extraordinary individuality, for, in a letter dated 1829, Madame Bonheur wrote to her husband: "I cannot say what Rosa will be, but of this I feel sure—she will

be no ordinary woman"—a prophecy the writer did not live to see fulfilled, since she died in 1833. Rosa was placed by her father at a *pension* in the Rue de Reuillot, where she spent her time, if not like the Fra Lippo Lippi of Browning's imagination, who drew men's faces on his copy-books—

> Scrawled them within the antiphonary's marge,
> Joined legs and arms to the long music notes,
> Found nose and eyes and chin for A's and B's,
> And made a string of pictures of the world—

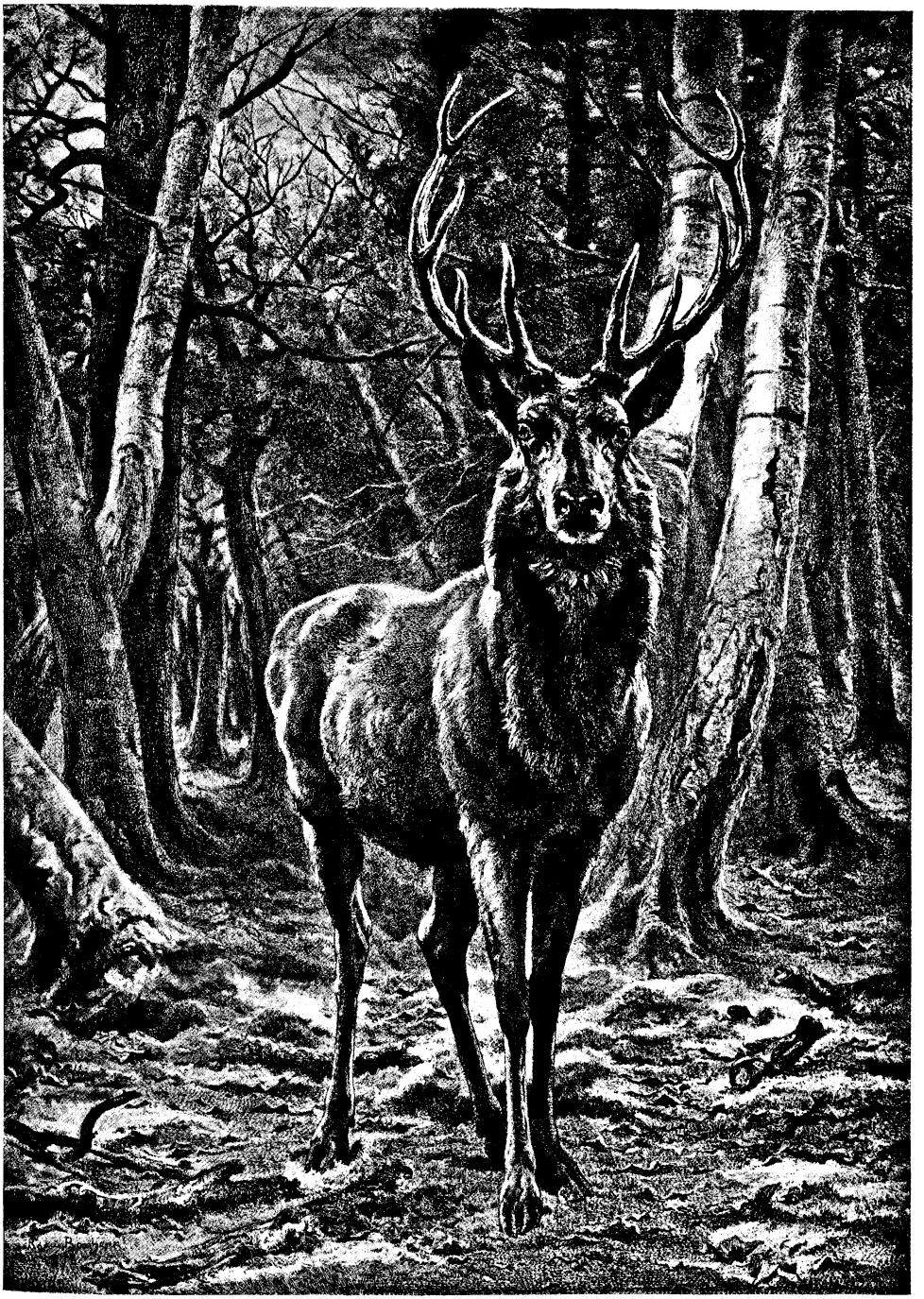
she certainly passed her school hours in a manner equally characteristic, for she covered her copy-books with sketches of horses, cows, sheep, and animals of all kinds—a habit which, although a source of amusement to her young brothers and sisters, manifested an artistic tendency which her father thought necessary to check. He therefore removed her from school and apprenticed her to a *couturière*. Needlework, however, proved as uncongenial to her taste as had grammar, and M. Bonheur, wisely recognising that the usual feminine occupations of her sex were repugnant to her, resolved to cultivate a taste he could not repress, and took her artistic inclinations and her small self into his studio. He had the courage to resist the prejudices of the time, and he was a man fully awake to the trenchant and broadening teaching of the times, for, as M. René Peyrol has recorded, the artistic ideas of M. Bonheur were certainly advanced, and it was those ideas that "he employed in the training of his daughter. It is true the mind into which he inculcated his principles was exceptionally favourable to their reception, but it is nevertheless unquestionable that a discriminating early training exercised a wonderful influence on Mlle. Bonheur, and to this she owed, in great part, that sureness of eye and hand and that remarkable recollection of forms which are, of all others, the most striking features of her talent."

Rosa Bonheur, in these early years, made rapid progress, and with feverish zeal helped her father in his work of preparing drawings for publishers—spent whole days of study at



"SCOTCH CATTLE AT REST, GLENCOE." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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"ON THE ALERT." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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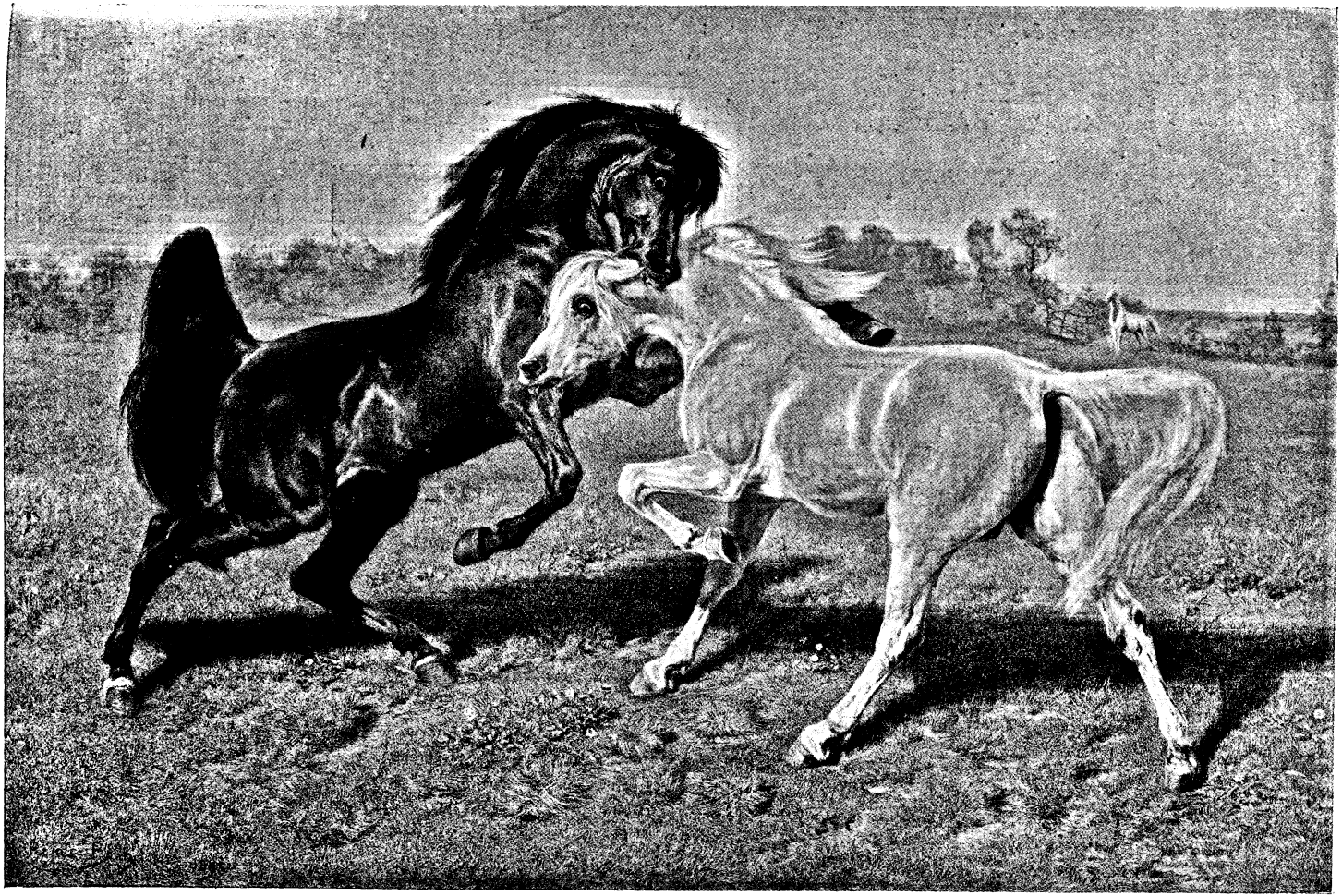
the Louvre, copying Old Masters, of whom Poussin and Paul Potter were her favourite models—helping in this way to increase the scanty resources of the family exchequer, and gaining for herself not only experience of the spirit in which the Old Masters worked, but a considerable amount of flattering encomiums. When she was eighteen, she painted her first original picture, taking as subject two pet rabbits nibbling carrots. This work, supplemented by another canvas representing sheep and goats, was exhibited in the Salon of 1841. Three years later her father wrote: "Rosa's pictures have produced a good impression . . . M. Goudin, painter to the King . . . has heaped upon her such praises that I should fear, if I were less convinced of the high character of her mind, that she might suffer herself to be unduly elated." The following year, 1845, shows her the recipient of a gold medal of the third class, and in 1848 one of the first class. This last was a year in which she painted a masterpiece, "Labourage Nivernaise," and established her lasting reputation. The French Government expressed a wish to acquire the work for the Musée du Luxembourg, and although the finances of the country were then in too poor a state to admit of more than £120 being offered for it, the artist accepted the sum, and the work of a girl of twenty-seven years of age thus became the property of the French nation. Her father, appointed in the previous year director of drawing to the ladies' school in the Rue de Touraine, lived only sufficiently long to see this, one of his daughter's first works, completed. Upon his death, the post he had so recently acquired was offered to Rosa and accepted by her—a position she actively occupied until 1860, and afterwards retained until the end of her life as *directrice honoraire*. The success of the "Labourage Nivernaise" prompted her to yet more ambitious efforts, and "The Horse Fair," which she called her "Parthenon Frieze," was the success of the Salon of 1853.



"READY." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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In order to make sketches and studies of animals for her pictures, Rosa Bonheur, when employed upon the "Labourage," had been in the habit of visiting the slaughter-houses of Paris, where, among butchers and cowherds, in company with her devoted friend and pupil, Mlle. Micas, or her brother, she would do her work in the midst of the most repugnant scenes, experiencing no little unpleasantness and inconvenience as a woman amongst a crowd of ill-mannered and brutalised men. When, therefore, she decided to paint "The Horse Fair," she resolved to free herself from the trammels imposed by her woman's garb. With short hair and masculine dress—regarded by those amongst whom she mixed as

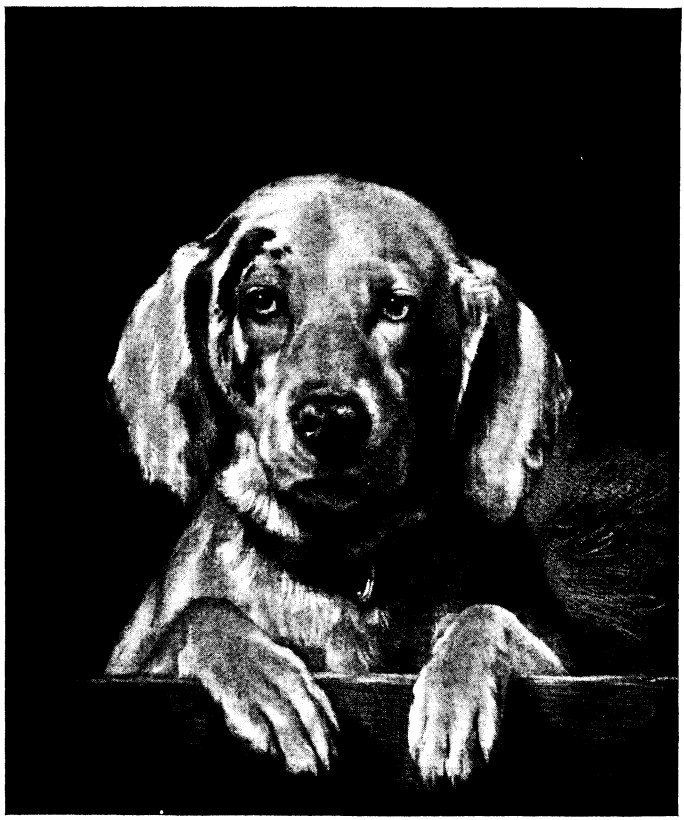


"THE DUEL: A FIGHT BETWEEN 'GODOLPHIN ARABIAN' AND 'HOBGOBLIN.'" BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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a young painter curious to study the habits of horses—she was enabled quietly to pursue her work. A certain vigour of character and of feature contributed to her successful disguise. A journalist who made her acquaintance in 1852 wrote of her as small of stature, with features designed on straight, regular lines, with full, square forehead and dark, quick, flashing eyes, and as impelled forward in her work, not by reckless audacity, but by greatness of soul and consciousness of her own strength. Writing of her at a later period, in *The Art Journal*, M. René Peyrol, says: "She dresses, when at home, in men's attire, and to those who know her in her own house it is hard to imagine her dressed otherwise, so used are they to seeing her in her studio and park wearing a large blue blouse, embroidered at the neck and shoulders, similar to the blouses which the peasants wear."

That home in which M. Peyrol speaks of her is the château which stands on the top of the hill near the little village of By, not far from Fontainebleau, on the banks of the Seine. Worldly prosperity, the result of the recognition of her extraordinary talent, permitted Mlle. Bonheur to acquire it in 1850. She added a wing to it, which comprised a studio, a few extra rooms, and large stables, and in 1860 took up her residence there.

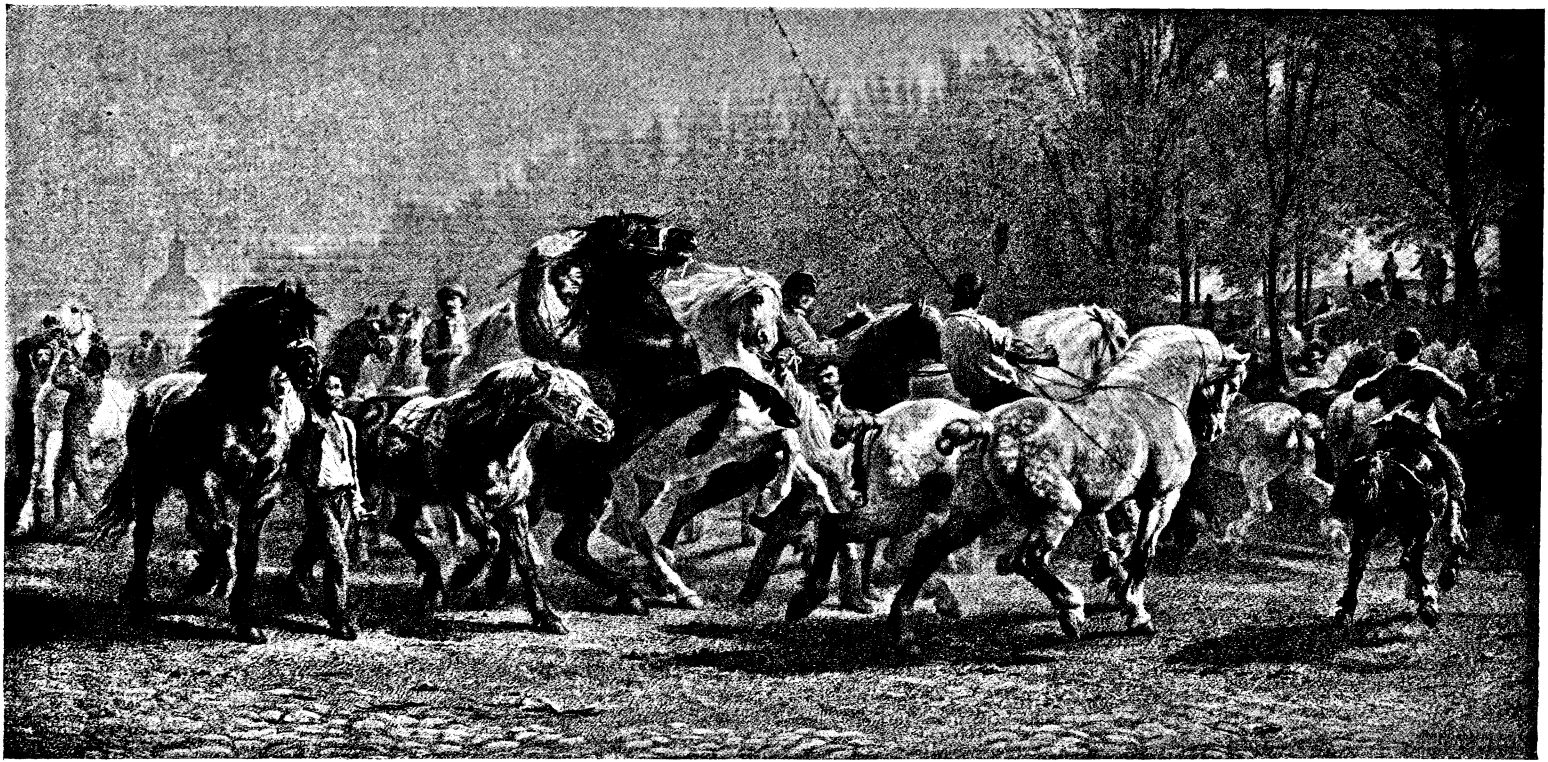


"PATIENT." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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In the grounds of the château browsed and lived sheep and goats from Brittany, Auvergne, and Scotland, rare birds, deer, lions and boars, gazelles, elks, chamois, and a whole host of dogs of all kinds and breeds—spaniels, St. Bernards, Newfoundlands, harriers and terriers of all sorts and conditions, for she chose her friends chiefly from amongst this trustworthy and loyal race, which abuses no confidence, makes no mental reservations, is unconscious of the "ifs" and "ands" which qualify friendship, and shows the highest form of generosity, that of grateful acceptance. Familiarity with these dumb folk tarnishes in no way our prestige. They give no advice, they attach no blame, they pretend to no cleverness, show no indiscretions, tell no false hoods, but they estimate human beings by the light their own loyalty to them sheds. "The more I know of mankind, the more I love the animals," is a saying that might be attributed to Rosa Bonheur, so completely does it express her attitude of understanding and love for her dumb friends.

With the exhibition of "The Horse Fair," in 1853, came the acclamation of Rosa Bonheur as a great artist—a reputation which never waned, for, in France to-day, her talent is held as a national glory. Her work had been *hors concours* at the Salon



"THE HORSE FAIR." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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since 1848, but in 1853 came universal recognition. So popularised was the genius of the artist, that the Emperor sought to purchase the picture of "The Horse Fair;" but as the funds of the Ministre des Beaux Arts did not run to the amount the artist asked, negotiations for its purchase fell through. Then the picture was sent for exhibition to Ghent, and here it called forth such enthusiasm that the citizens had a large cameo of it engraved, which they presented to the painter. Shortly afterwards the well-known picture-dealer of London, Mr. Gambart—the enterprising traditions of whose business are to-day being worthily continued by Messrs. Lefèvre—bought the work, and, bringing it to England, exhibited it in our principal towns. Later he sold it to an American, and it has found its permanent home in the Museum of New York; and England, awakening too late to the work of a woman whom Max Nordau calls the Rudyard Kipling of the brush, had to be content, having failed to secure the original, with a replica, and admit this, the first work of a living foreign artist, to its National Gallery.

Although, as we have shown, the exhibition of "The Horse Fair" won for its painter enthusiastic praise and a world-wide reputation, it raised against her a host of adverse critics, who, perhaps because they could not understand its being within the power of a woman to dare and to achieve of work a class outside the usual scope of her sex's attainments, sought comparison and classification for a branch of art which is ever incommensurable and incomparable. Ruskin was amongst these critics. "This lady," he wrote of "The Plough," the fine work exhibited in 1858, "gains in power every year, but there is one stern fact concerning art which she will do well to consider, if she means her power to reach full develop-



"A HIGHLAND SHEPHERD." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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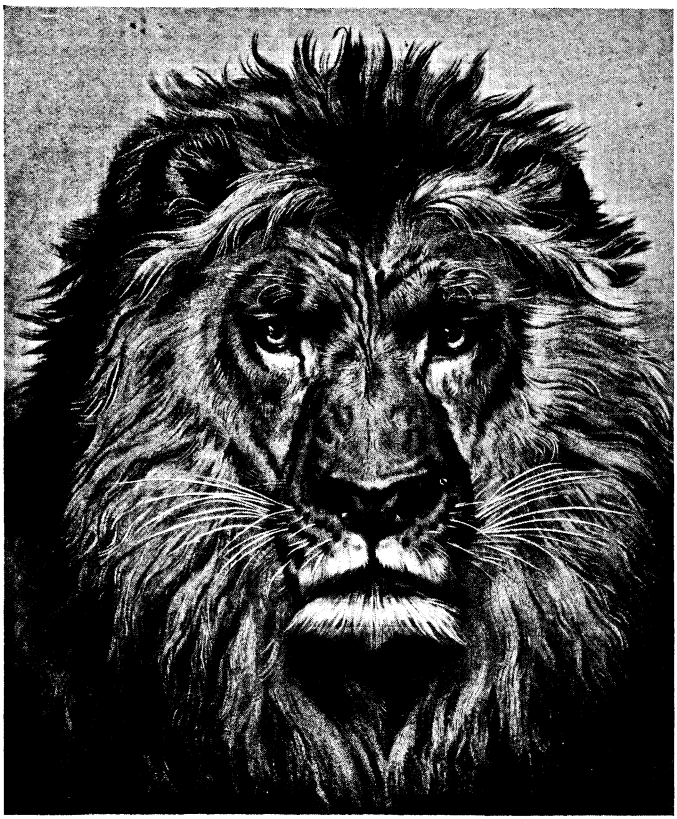


"CHANGING PASTURE." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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ment. No painter of animals ever yet was entirely great who shrank from painting the human face, and Mlle. Bonheur clearly *does* shrink from it. Of course, a ploughman, ploughing westward at evening, slouches his hat and stoops his head, but the back of him, in this action, with a foreshortened yoke of oxen and three of the awkwardest haystacks in France, do not altogether constitute a subject for a picture. In 'The Horse Fair' the human faces were nearly all dexterously but disagreeably hidden, and the one chiefly shown had not the slightest character. Mlle. Bonheur may rely upon this, that if she cannot paint a man's face, she can neither paint a horse's, a dog's, nor a bull's. There is in every animal's eye a dim image and gleam of humanity, a flash of strange light through which their life looks out and up to our great mystery of command over them, and claims the fellowship of the creature, if not of the soul. I assure Mlle. Bonheur, strange as the words may sound to her after what she has been told by huntsmen and racers, she has never painted a horse yet. She has only painted trotting bodies of horses."

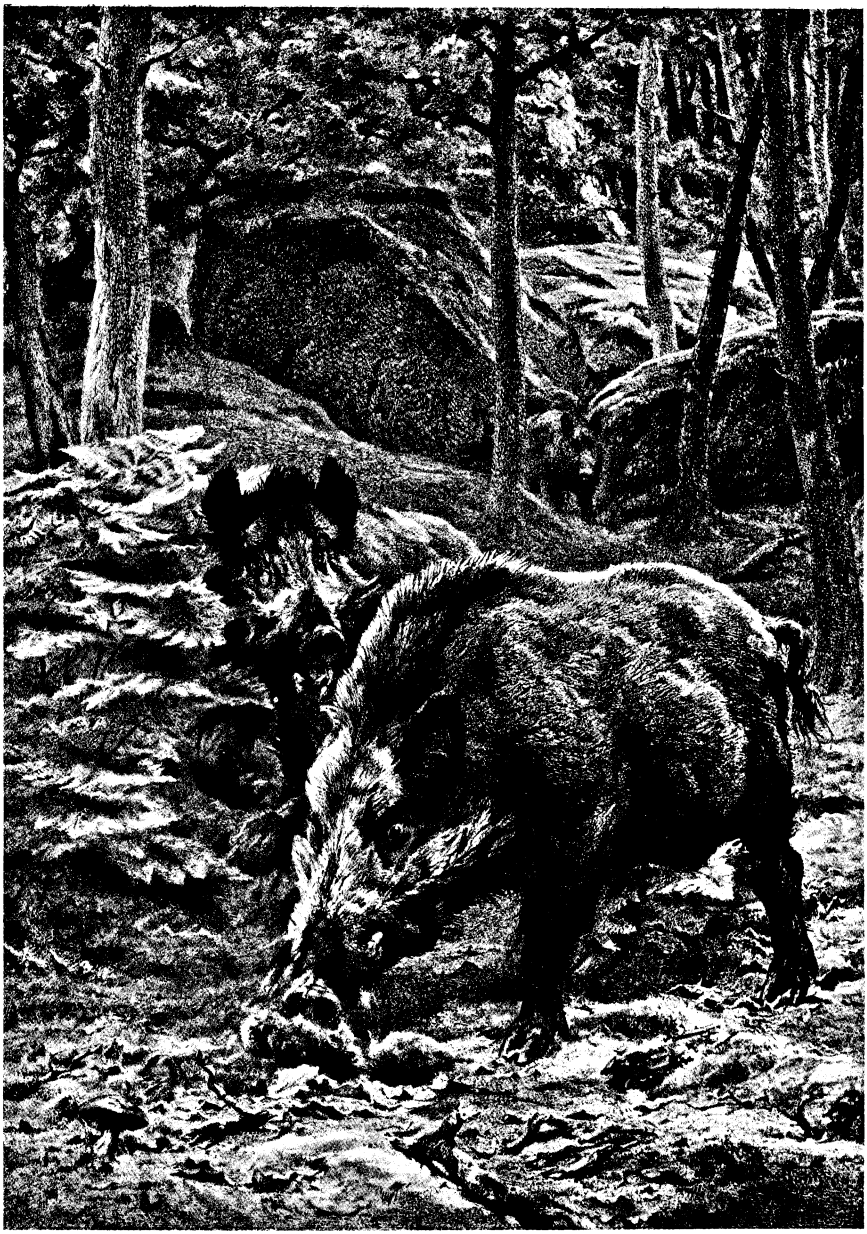
An ungracious and untrue criticism, and if there is a Ruskin-reading population to-day, it, let us hope, discriminates between the indifferent matter and the admirable manner of the one accepted Victorian authority on art matters. But other critics, besides Ruskin, sought comparison for Rosa Bonheur's talent, and compared her to Courbet, much as they compared Courbet to Millet, failing to see that, when once the eyes of the younger generation were opened to appreciation of the visible beauty and spiritual poetry of the world in which they lived, they, although they belonged to the movement that was the revolt against convention, worked out each their individual theories, which either modified or exaggerated that new romantic movement. Rosa Bonheur belonged to the movement generally, but from 1860, unmoved by the changes which were to bring a greater realism and naturalism into French art, she worked in retirement in her château till, at the age of seventy-seven, she ceased from all labour.



"AN OLD MONARCH." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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The story of the decoration of Rosa Bonheur with the Legion d'Honneur is one of those instances of disinterested admiration on the part of a gracious woman which shows an Empress's heart behind the Imperial purple. The Empress Eugénie, in 1864, took the trouble to make the personal acquaintance of Mlle. Rosa Bonheur. She visited her at the Château By, and there is no doubt that the character, the expression, the charm, and the talent of Mlle. Bonheur ingratiated her greatly with her



"A FORAGING PARTY." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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patroness. As the story goes, the Empress asked the decoration of the Emperor; but such an honour had never been conferred upon a woman, save for acts of exceptional bravery or charity, and therefore the advisers of Napoleon III. met the demand with a refusal so plausible that he could scarcely put himself in opposition to it. So for the time the matter lapsed, and since Mlle. Bonheur knew nothing of the intention, she suffered no disappointment.

There is an old proverb, however, about a wilful woman, and the Empress, like many another of her sex, has done her best to prove

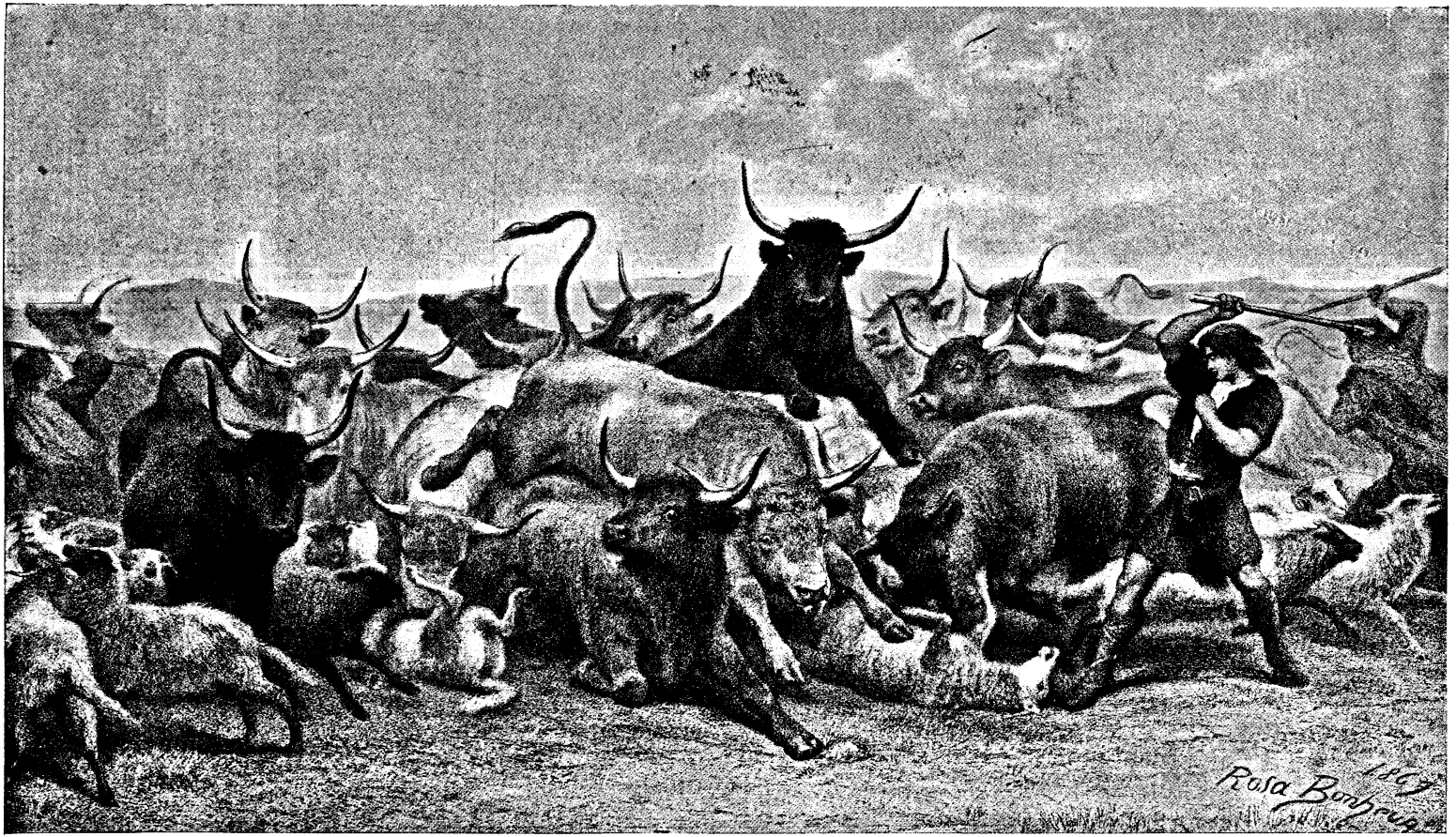
its truth ; and as, in the following year, she acted as Regent during a visit of the Emperor to Algeria, she used the Imperial power to carry out her intention. She sent her *protégée* word that she would visit her again at By. After a few friendly words and compliments anent the sketches for Her Majesty's picture, the Empress opened a small case carried by her chamberlain, and took from it the Cross of the Legion d'Honneur, and attached it to the breast of Rosa Bonheur. The Empress then kissed her, remarking that "she was happy to be able herself thus to recompense her talent, and that she honoured the woman as much as the artist." One wonders, since the Imperial fiat was announced in the *Moniteur* on the day of the Emperor's return from Algeria, how the Empress justified to him this stretching of the Imperial prerogative. But that he did not resent it is shown by the fact that Rosa Bonheur was later promoted to the honour of officer of the Order. Other honours quickly followed. The Emperor Maximilian of Mexico conferred upon Mlle. Bonheur the Order of San Carlos, the King of the Belgians created her a Chevalier of the Order of Leopold, and the Academy of Antwerp enrolled her name among its members.



"DENIZENS OF THE HIGHLANDS." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

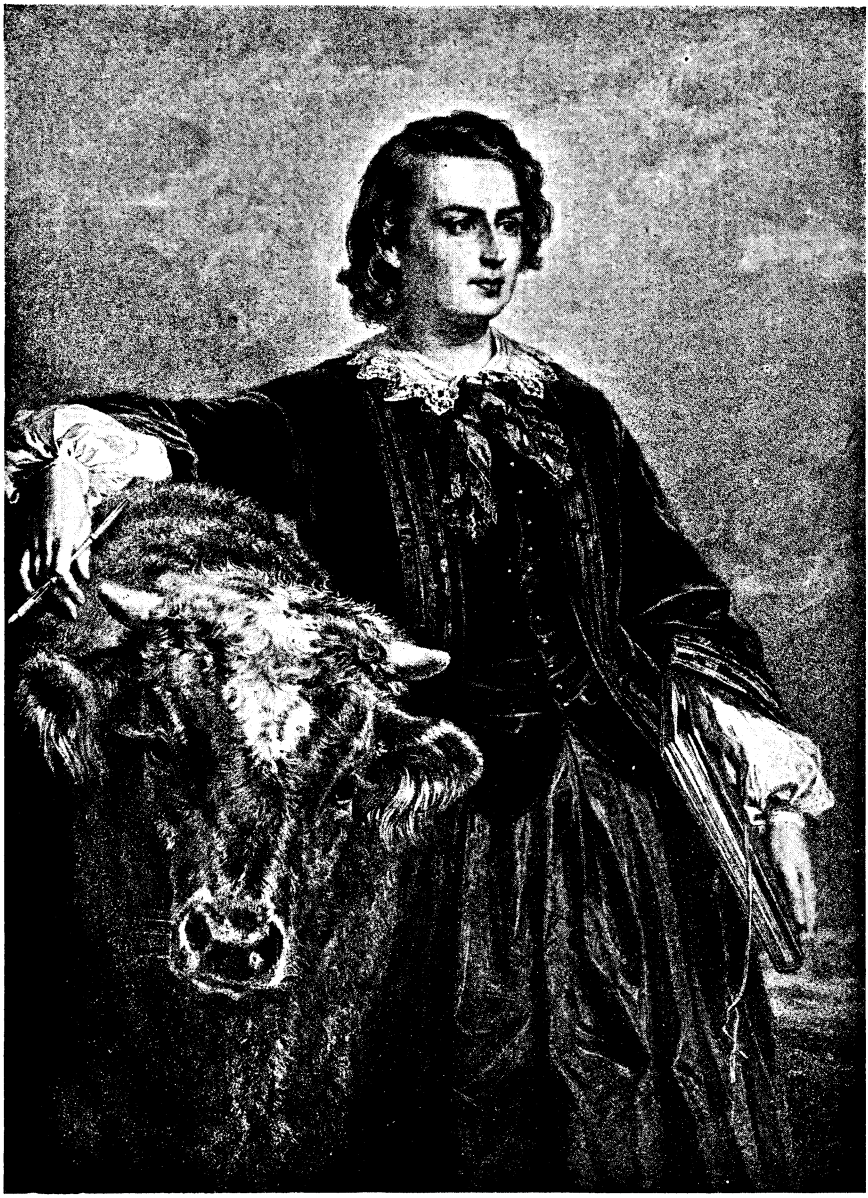
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M. Henri Frantz, the French art critic,



"A STAMPEDE." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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ROSA BONHEUR. FROM THE PORTRAIT BY DUBUFE.

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sums up Rosa Bonheur's talent as principally notable because "what is chiefly remarkable and admirable in her work is that, like her contemporary, Brascassat, she represents animals as they really are, as she saw them in the country. She gives us a picture of real life, instead of the often artificial presentment of rural scenes and incidents of animal life. Her gift of accurate observation was, however, allied to a certain dryness of style in painting; she often failed to give a perfect sense of atmosphere. On the other hand, the anatomy of her animals is always faultlessly true. There is nothing feminine in her handling; her treatment is always manly and firm."

A PIECE OF STEAK.

By JACK LONDON.



ITH the last morsel of bread Jim Catesby wiped his plate clean of the last particle of flour-gravy, and chewed the resulting mouthful in a slow and meditative way. When he arose from the table, he was oppressed by the feeling that he was distinctly hungry. Yet he alone had eaten. The two children in the other room had been sent early to bed in order that in sleep they might forget they had gone supperless. His wife had touched nothing, and had sat silently and watched him with solicitous eyes. She was a thin, worn woman of the working class, though signs of an earlier prettiness were not wanting in her face. The flour for the gravy she had borrowed from the neighbour across the hall. The last two ha'pennies had gone to buy the bread.

He sat down by the window on a rickety chair that protested under his weight, and quite mechanically he put his pipe in his mouth and dipped into the side-pocket of his coat. The absence of any tobacco made him aware of his action, and, with a scowl for his forgetfulness, he put the pipe away. His movements were slow, almost hulking, as though he were burdened by the heavy weight of his muscles. He was a solid-bodied, stolid-looking man, and his appearance did not suffer from being over-prepossessing. His rough clothes were old and slouchy. The uppers of his shoes were too weak to carry the heavy re-soling that was itself of no recent date, and his cotton shirt, a cheap, two-shilling affair, showed a frayed collar and ineradicable paint-stains.

But it was Jim Catesby's face that advertised him unmistakably for what he was. It was the face of a typical prize-fighter, of one who had put in long years of service in the squared ring, and by that means developed and emphasised all the marks of the fighting beast. It was distinctly a lowering countenance, and, that no feature of it might escape notice, it was clean-shaven. The lips were shapeless and constituted a mouth, harsh to excess, that was like a gash in his face. The jaw was aggressive, brutal, heavy. The eyes, slow of movement and heavy-lidded, were almost expressionless under the shaggy, indrawn brows. Sheer animal that he was, the eyes were the most animal-like feature about him. They were sleepy, lion-like, the eyes of a fighting animal. The forehead slanted quickly back to the hair, which, clipped close, showed every bump of the villainous-looking head. A nose, twice-broken and moulded variously by countless blows, and a cauliflower ear, permanently swollen and distorted to twice its size, completed his adornment; while the beard, fresh-shaven as it was, sprouted in the skin and gave the face a blue-black stain.

Altogether, it was the face of a man to be afraid of in a dark alley or lonely place. And yet Jim Catesby was not a criminal, nor had he ever done anything criminal. Outside of brawls, common to his walk in life, he had harmed no one. Nor had he ever been known to pick a quarrel. He was a professional, and all the fighting brutishness of him was reserved for his professional appearances. Outside the ring he was slow-going, easy-natured, and in his younger days, when money was flush, too open-handed for his own good. He bore no grudges and had few enemies. Fighting was a business with him. In the ring he struck to hurt, struck to maim, struck to destroy, but there was no animus in it. It was a plain business proposition. Audiences assembled and paid for the spectacle of men knocking each other out. The winner took the big end of the purse. When Jim Catesby faced the Wolloomooloo Gouger, twenty years before, he knew that the Gouger's jaw was only four months healed after having been broken in a Newcastle bout. And he had played for that jaw, and broken it again in the ninth round, not because he bore the Gouger any ill-will, but because that was the surest way to put the Gouger out and win the big end of the purse. Nor had the Gouger borne him any ill-will for doing it. It was the game, and both knew the game and played it.

Jim Catesby had never been a talker, and he sat by the window, morosely silent,

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staring at his hands. The veins stood out on the backs, large and swollen, and the knuckles, smashed and battered and malformed, testified to the use to which they had been put. He had never heard that a man's life was the life of his arteries, but



"'Ay, I gotter do 'im,' he repeated. 'That's all there is to it. I jus' gotter do him.'"

well he knew the meaning of those big, upstanding veins. His heart had pumped too much blood through them at top pressure. They no longer did the work. He had stretched the elasticity out of them, and with their distension had passed his endurance. He tired easily now. No longer could he do a fast twenty rounds, hammer and tongs, fight, fight, fight, from gong to gong, with fierce rally on top of fierce rally, beaten to the ropes and in turn beating his opponent to the ropes, and rallying fiercest and fastest of all in that last twentieth round, with the house on its feet and yelling, himself rushing, striking, ducking, raining showers of blows upon showers of blows, and receiving showers of blows in return, and all the time the heart faithfully pumping the surging blood through the adequate veins. The veins, swollen at the time, had always shrunk down again . . . though not quite; each time, imperceptibly at first, remaining just a trifle larger than before. He stared at them and at his battered knuckles, and for

the moment caught a vision of the youthful excellence of those hands before ever the first knuckle had been smashed on the hard head of Benny Jones, otherwise known as the Welsh Terror.

The impression of his hunger came back on him.

"Lumme, but couldn't I go a piece of steak!" he muttered aloud, clenching his huge fists and spitting out a smothered oath.

"I tried both Burke's and Sawley's," his wife said half apologetically.

"An' they wouldn't?" he demanded.

"Not a ha'penny. Burke said——" She faltered and stopped.

"G'wan! What'd he say?"

"As how he was thinkin' Ransom 'ud do ye to-night, an' as how yer score was comfortable big as it was."

Jim Catesby grunted, but did not reply. He was busy thinking of the bull-terrier he had kept in his younger days, and to which he had given steaks without end. Burke would have given him credit for a thousand steaks — then. But times had changed. Jim Catesby was getting old, and old men, fighting before second-rate clubs, could not expect to run bills of any size with the tradesmen.

He had got up in the morning with a longing for a piece of steak, and the longing had not abated. He had not had a fair training for this fight. It was a drought year in Australia, times were hard, and work of the most irregular was difficult to find. He had had no sparring partner, and his food had not been of the best, nor always sufficient. He had done a few days' navvy work, when he could get it, and he had run around the Domain in the early mornings to get his legs in shape. But it was hard, training without a partner, and with a wife and two kiddies who must be fed. Credit with the tradesmen had undergone very slight expansion when he was matched with Ransom. The secretary of the Gaiety Club had advanced him three pounds—the loser's end of the purse—and beyond that had refused to go. Now and again he had managed to borrow a few shillings from old pals, who would have lent more only that it was a drought year and they were hard put themselves. No—and there was no use in disguising the fact to himself—his training had not been satisfactory. He should have had better food and no worries. Besides, when a man is forty, it is harder to get into condition than when he is twenty.

"What time is it, Lizzie?" he asked.

His wife went across the hall to inquire, and came back.

"Quarter before eight."

"They'll be startin' the first bout in a few minutes," he said. "Only a try-out Then there's a four-round spar 'tween Dealer Wells an' Gridley, an' a ten-round go 'tween Starlight an' some sailor bloke. I don't come on for over an hour."

At the end of another silent ten minutes he rose to his feet.

"Truth is, Lizzie, I ain't had proper trainin'."

He reached for his hat and started for the door. He did not offer to kiss her—he never did on going out—but on this night she dared to kiss him, throwing her arms around him and compelling him to bend down to her face. She looked quite small against the massive bulk of the man.

"Good luck, Jim!" she said. "You gotter do 'im."

"Ay, I gotter do 'im," he repeated. "That's all there is to it. I jus' gotter do 'im."

He laughed with an attempt at heartiness, while she pressed more closely against him. Across her shoulders he looked around the bare room. It was all he had in the world, with the rent overdue, and her and the kiddies. And he was leaving it to go out into the night to get meat for his mate and cubs—not like a modern working-man going to his machine-grind, but in the old, primitive, royal, animal way—by fighting for it.

"I gotter do 'im," he repeated, this time a hint of desperation in his voice. "If it's a win, it's thirty quid (pounds), an' I can pay all that's owin', with a lump o' money left over. If it's a lose, I get naught—not even a penny for me to ride home on the tram. The secretary's give all that's comin' from a loser's end. Good-bye, old woman! I'll come straight home if it's a win."

"An' I'll be waitin' up," she called to him along the hall.

It was a full two miles to the Gaiety, and as he walked along, he remembered how in his palmy days—he had once been the heavyweight champion of New South Wales—he would have ridden in a cab to the fight; and how, most likely, some heavy backer would have paid for the cab and ridden with him. There was Tommy Burns and that Yankee nigger, Jack Johnson—they rode about in motor-cars. And he walked! And, as any man knew, a hard two miles was not the best

preliminary to a fight. He was an old 'un, and the world did not wag well with old 'uns. He was good for nothing now except navvy work, and his broken nose and swollen ear were against him even in that. He found himself wishing that he had learned a trade. It would have been better in the long run. But no one had told him, and he knew deep down in his heart that he would not have listened if they had. It had been so easy. Big money—sharp, glorious fights—periods of rest and loafing in between—a following of eager flatterers—the slaps on the back, the shakes of the hand, the toffs glad to buy him a drink for the privilege of five minutes' talk—and the glory of it, the yelling houses, the whirlwind finish, the referee's "Jim wins!" and his name in the sporting columns next day.

Those had been times! But he realised now, in his slow, ruminating way, that it was the old 'uns he had been putting away. He was Youth, rising, and they were Age, sinking. No wonder it had been easy—they with their swollen veins and battered knuckles, and weary in the bones of them from the long battles they had already fought. He remembered the time he put out old Stowsher Bill, at Rush-Cutters Bay, in the eighteenth round, and how old Bill had cried afterwards in the dressing-room like a baby. Perhaps old Bill's rent had been overdue. Perhaps he'd had at home a missus an' a couple of kiddies. And perhaps Bill, that very day of the fight, had had a hungering for a piece of steak. Bill had fought game and taken incredible punishment. He could see now, after he had gone through the mill himself, that Stowsher Bill had fought for a bigger stake that night twenty years ago than had young Catesby, who had fought for glory and easy money. No wonder Stowsher Bill had cried afterwards in the dressing-room.

Well, a man had only so many fights in him, to begin with. It was the iron law of the game. One man might have a hundred hard fights in him, another man only twenty. Each, according to the make of him and the quality of his fibre, had a definite number, and when he had fought them he was done. Yes, he had had more fights in him than most of them, and he had had far more than his share of the hard, gruelling fights—the kind that worked the heart and lungs to bursting, that took the elastic out of the arteries and made hard knots of muscle out of youth's sleek suppleness, that wore out nerve and stamina, and made brain and bones weary from excess of effort and endurance overwrought. Yes, he had done better than all of them. There was none of his old fighting partners left. He was the last of the old guard. He had seen them all finished and done, and he had had a hand in finishing some of them himself.

They had tried him out against the old 'uns, and one after another he had put them away, laughing, when, like old Stowsher Bill, they cried in the dressing-room. And now he was an old 'un, and they tried out the youngsters on him. There was that bloke Ransom. He had come over from New Zealand with a record behind him. But nobody in Australia knew anything about him, so they put him up against old Jim Catesby. If Ransom made a showing, he would be given better men to fight, with bigger purses to win, so it was to be depended upon that he would put up a fierce battle. He had everything to win by it—money and glory and career; and Jim Catesby was the grizzled old chopping-block that guarded the highway to fame and fortune. And he had nothing to win except thirty quid to pay to the landlord and the tradesmen. And as Jim Catesby thus ruminated, there came to his stolid vision the form of Youth, glorious Youth, rising exultant and invincible, supple of muscle and silken of skin, with heart and lungs that had never been tired and torn, and that laughed at limitation of effort. Yes, Youth was the Nemesis. It destroyed the old 'uns, and recked not at all that in so doing it destroyed itself. It enlarged its arteries and smashed its knuckles, and was in turn destroyed by Youth. For Youth was ever youthful. It was only Age that grew old.

At Castlereagh Street he turned to the left, and three blocks along came to the Gaiety. A crowd of young larrikins, hanging outside the door, made respectful way for him, and he heard one say to another: "That's 'im! That's Jim Catesby!"

Inside, on his way to his dressing-room, he encountered the secretary, a keen-eyed, shrewd-faced young man, who shook his hand.

"How are you feelin', Jim?" he asked.

"Fit as a fiddle!" Catesby answered, though he knew that he lied, and that, if he had a quid, he would give it right there for a good piece of steak.

When he emerged from the dressing-room, his seconds behind him, and came down the aisle to the squared ring in the midmost centre of the hall, a burst of greeting and

applause went up from the waiting crowd. He acknowledged salutations right and left, though few of the faces did he know. Most of them were the faces of kiddies unborn when he was winning his first laurels in the squared ring. He leaped lightly to the raised platform, and ducked through the ropes to his corner, where he sat down on a folding stool. Jack Ball, the referee, came over and shook his hand. Ball was a broken-down pugilist, who for over ten years had not entered the ring as a principal. Catesby was glad that he had him for referee. They were both old 'uns. If he should rough it with Ransom a bit beyond the rules, he knew Ball could be depended upon to pass it by.

Aspiring young heavy-weights, one after another, were climbing into the ring and being presented to the audience by the referee. Also, he issued their challenges for them.

"Young Pronto," Ball announced, "from North Sydney, challenges the winner for fifty pounds side bet."

The audience applauded, and applauded again as Ransom himself sprang through the ropes and sat down in his corner. Jim Catesby looked across the ring at him curiously, for in a few minutes they would be locked together in merciless combat, each trying with all the force of him to knock the other into unconsciousness. But little could he see, for Ransom, like himself, had trousers and sweater on over his ring costume. His face was strongly handsome, crowned with a curly mop of yellow hair, while his thick, muscular neck hinted at bodily magnificence.

Young Pronto went to one corner and then the other, shaking hands with the principals and dropping down out of the ring. The challenges went on. Ever Youth climbed through the ropes—Youth unknown but insatiable—crying out to mankind that with strength and skill it would match issues with the winner. A few years before, in his own heyday of invincibleness, Jim Catesby would have been amused and bored by these preliminaries. But now he sat fascinated, unable to shake the vision of Youth from his eyes. Always were these youngsters rising up in the boxing game, springing through the ropes and shouting their defiance, and always were the old 'uns going down before them. They climbed to success over the bodies of the old 'uns. And ever they came, more and more youngsters—Youth unquenchable and irresistible—and ever they put the old 'uns away, themselves becoming old 'uns and travelling the same downward path, while behind them, ever pressing on them, was Youth eternal, the new babies grown strong and lusty and dragging their elders down, with behind them more babies to the end of time—Youth that must have its will and that will never die.

Catesby glanced over to the press-box and nodded to Morgan, of *The Gleaner*, and Corbett, of *The Bulletin*. Then he held out his hands, while Sid Sullivan and Charley Bates, his seconds, slipped on his gloves and laced them tight, closely watched by one of Ransom's seconds, who first examined critically the tapes on Jim's knuckles. A second of his own was in Ransom's corner performing a like office. Ransom's trousers were pulled off, and, as he stood up, his sweater was skimmed off over his head. And Catesby, looking, saw Youth incarnate, deep-chested, heavy-thewed, with muscles that slipped and slid like live things under the white satin skin. The whole body was a-crawl with life, and Catesby knew that it was a body untired, a life that had never oozed its freshness out through the aching pores during the long, gruelling fights wherein Youth paid its toll and departed not quite so young as when it entered.

The two men advanced to meet each other, and, as the gong sounded and the seconds clattered out of the ring with the folding stools, they shook hands with each other and instantly took their fighting attitudes. And instantly, like a mechanism of steel and springs balanced on a hair-trigger, Ransom was in, and out, and in again, landing a left to the eyes, a right to the ribs, ducking a counter, dancing lightly away, and dancing menacingly back again. He was swift and clever. It was a dazzling exhibition. The house yelled its approbation. But Catesby was not dazzled. He had fought too many fights and too many youngsters. He knew the blows for what they were—too quick and too deft to be dangerous. Evidently Ransom was going to rush things from the start. It was to be expected. It was the way of Youth, expending its splendour and excellence in wild insurgence and furious onslaught, overwhelming opposition with its own unlimited glory of strength and desire.

Ransom was in and out, here, there, and everywhere, light-footed and eager-hearted, a living wonder of white flesh and stinging muscle that wove itself into a dazzling fabric of attack, slipping and leaping like a flying shuttle from action to action through a thousand actions, all of them centred upon the destruction of Catesby, who stood

between him and fortune. And Catesby patiently endured. He knew his business, and he knew Youth now that Youth was no longer his. There was nothing to do till the other lost some of his steam, was his thought, and he grinned to himself as he deliberately ducked so as to receive a heavy blow on the top of his head. It was a wicked thing to do, yet eminently fair according to the rules of the boxing game. A man was supposed to take care of his own knuckles, and if he insisted on hitting an opponent on the top of the head, he did so at his own peril. Catesby could have ducked lower and let the blow whiz harmlessly past. But he remembered his own early fights, and how he smashed his first knuckle on the head of the Welsh Terror. He was but playing the game. That duck had accounted for one of Ransom's knuckles. Not that Ransom would mind it now. He would go on, superbly regardless, hitting as hard as ever throughout the fight. But later on, when the long ring battles had begun to tell, he would regret that knuckle, and look back and remember how he smashed it on Jim Catesby's head.

The first round was all Ransom's, and he had the house yelling with the rapidity of his whirlwind rushes. He overwhelmed Catesby with avalanches of punches, and Catesby did nothing. He never struck once, contenting himself with covering up, blocking and ducking and clinching to avoid punishment. He occasionally feinted, shook his head when the weight of a punch landed, and moved stolidly about, never leaping or springing or wasting an ounce of strength. Ransom must foam the froth of youth away before discreet Age could dare to retaliate. All Catesby's movements were slow and methodical, and his heavy-lidded, slow-moving eyes gave him the seeming of being half asleep or dazed. Yet they were eyes that saw everything, that had been trained to see everything through all his twenty years and odd in the ring. They were eyes that did not blink nor waver before an impending blow, but that coolly saw and calculated and measured distance.

Seated in his corner for the minute's rest at the end of the round, he lay back, with outstretched legs, his arms resting on the right-angle of the ropes, his chest and abdomen heaving frankly and deeply as he gulped down the air driven by the towels of his seconds. He listened with closed eyes to the voices of the house.

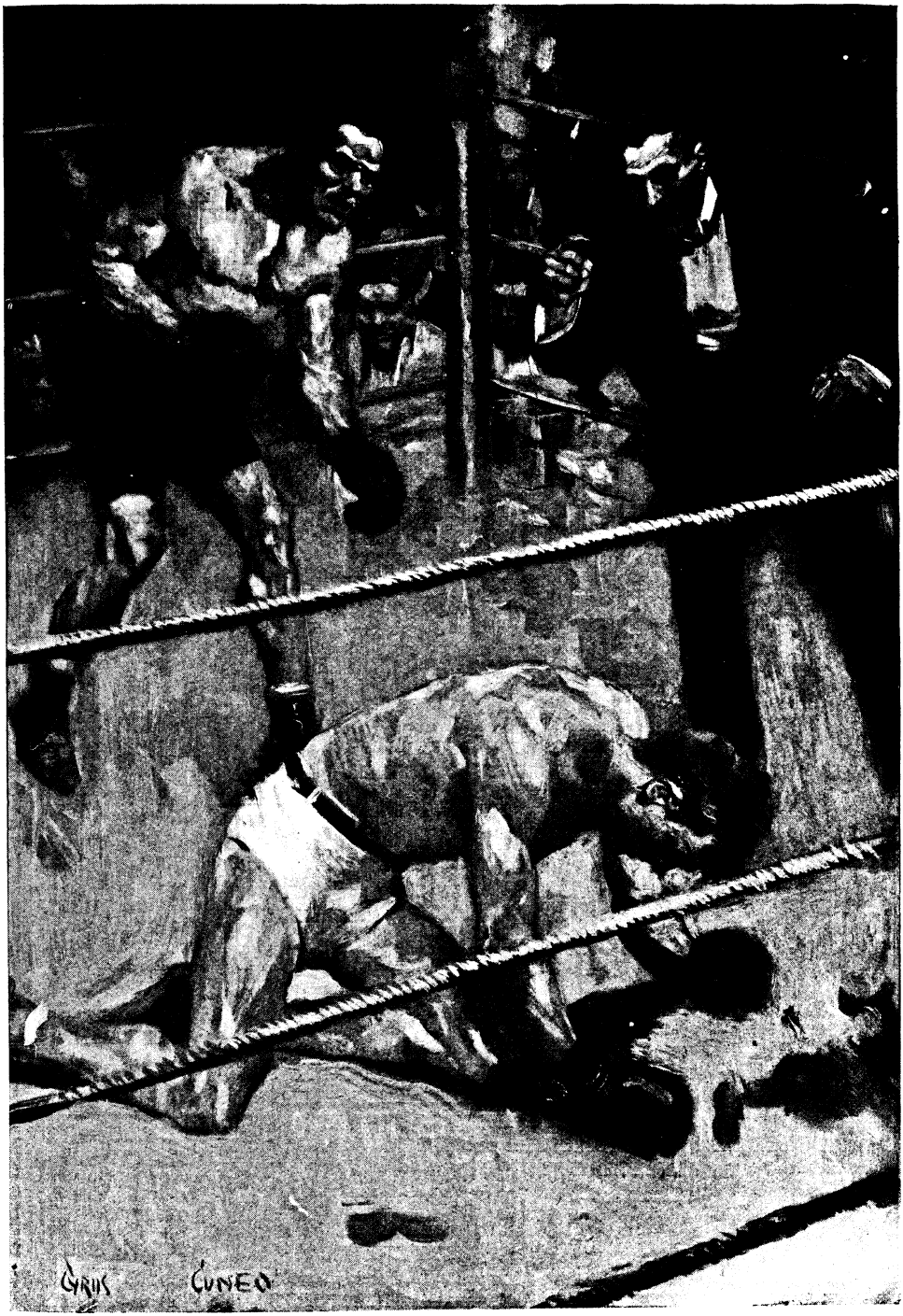
"Why don't yeh fight, Jim?" many were crying. "Yeh ain't afraid of 'im, are yeh?"

"Muscle-bound," he heard a man on a front seat comment. "He can't move quicker. Two to one on Ransom, in quids."

The gong struck, and the two men advanced from their corners. Ransom came forward fully three-quarters of the distance, eager to begin again, but Catesby was content to advance the shorter distance. It was in line with his policy of economy. He had not been well trained, and he had not had enough to eat, and every step counted. Besides, he had already walked two miles to the ringside. It was a repetition of the first round, with Ransom attacking like a whirlwind and with the audience indignantly demanding why Catesby did not fight. Beyond feinting, and several slowly delivered and ineffectual blows, he did nothing save block and stall and clinch. Ransom wanted to make the pace fast, while Catesby, out of his wisdom, refused to accommodate him. He grinned with a certain wistful pathos in his ring-battered countenance, and went on cherishing his strength with the jealousy of which only Age is capable. Ransom was Youth, and he threw his strength away with the munificent abandon of Youth. To Catesby belonged the ring generalship, the wisdom bred of long, aching fights. He watched with cool eyes and head, moving slowly and waiting for Ransom's froth to foam away. To the majority of the onlookers it seemed as though Catesby was hopelessly outclassed, and they voiced their opinion in offers of three to one on Ransom. But there were wise ones—a few—who knew Catesby of old time, and who covered what they considered easy money.

The third round began as usual, one-sided, with Ransom doing all the leading and delivering all the punishment. A half-minute had passed, when Ransom, over-confident, left an opening. Catesby's eyes and right arm flashed in the same instant. It was his first real blow—a hook, with the twisted arch of the arm to make it rigid and with all the weight of the half-pivoted body behind it. It was like a sleepy-seeming lion suddenly thrusting out a lightning paw. Ransom, caught on the side of the jaw, was felled like a bullock. The audience gasped and murmured awe-stricken applause. The man was not muscle-bound, after all, and he could drive a blow like a trip-hammer.

Ransom was shaken. He rolled over and attempted to rise, but the sharp yells from his seconds to take the count restrained him.



"Only Youth could rise, and Ransom rose."

He knelt on one knee, ready to rise, and waited, while the referee stood over him, counting the seconds loudly in his ear. At the ninth he rose in fighting attitude, and Catesby, facing him, knew regret that the blow had not been an inch nearer the point of the jaw. That would have been a knock-out, and he could have carried the thirty quid home to the missus and the kiddies.

The round continued to the end of its three minutes, Ransom for the first time respectful of his opponent, and Catesby slow of movement and sleepy-eyed as ever. As the round neared its close, Catesby, warned of the fact by sight of the seconds crouching outside ready for the spring in through the ropes, worked the fight around to his own corner. And when the gong struck, he sat down immediately on the waiting stool, while Ransom had to walk all the way across the diagonal of the square to his own corner.

It was a little thing, but it was the sum of little things that counted. Ransom was compelled to walk that many more steps, to give up that much energy, and to lose a part of that precious minute of rest. At the beginning of every round Catesby loafed slowly out from his corner, forcing his opponent to advance the greater distance. The end of every round found the fight manœuvred by Catesby into his own corner, so that he could immediately sit down.

Two more rounds went by, in which Catesby was parsimonious of effort and Ransom prodigal. The latter's attempt to force a fast pace made Catesby uncomfortable, for a fair percentage of the multitudinous blows showered upon him went home; yet Catesby persisted in his dogged slowness, despite the crying of the young hot-heads for him to go in and fight. Again, in the sixth round, Ransom was careless; again Catesby's fearful right flashed out to the jaw, and again Ransom took the nine seconds' count.

By the seventh round Ransom's pink of condition was gone, and he settled down to what he knew was to be the hardest fight of his experience. Catesby was an old 'un, but a better old 'un than he had ever encountered—an old 'un who never lost his head, who was remarkably able at defence, whose blows had the impact of a knotted club, and who had a knock-out in either arm. On the other hand, Catesby dared not hit often. He never forgot his battered knuckles, and knew that every hit must count if the knuckles were to last out the fight. As he sat in his corner, glancing across at his opponent, the thought came to him that the sum of his wisdom and Ransom's youth would constitute a world's champion heavyweight. But that was the trouble. Ransom would never become a world champion. He lacked the wisdom, and the only way for him to get it was to buy it with Youth, and when wisdom was his, Youth would have been spent in buying it.

Catesby took every advantage he knew. He never missed an opportunity to clinch, and in effecting most of the clinches his shoulder drove stiffly into the other's ribs. In the philosophy of the ring, a shoulder was as good as a punch, so far as damage was concerned, and a great deal better so far as concerned expenditure of effort. Also, in the clinches, Catesby rested his weight on his opponent and was loath to let go. This compelled the interference of the referee, who tore them apart, always assisted by Ransom, who had not yet learned to rest. He could not refrain from using those glorious flying arms and writhing muscles of his, and when the other rushed into a clinch, striking shoulder against ribs and with head resting under Ransom's left arm, Ransom almost invariably swung his right behind his own back and into the projecting face. It was a clever stroke, much admired by the audience, but it was not dangerous, and therefore was just that much wasted strength. But Ransom was tireless and unaware of limitations, and Catesby grinned and doggedly endured.

Ransom developed a fierce right to the body, which made it appear that Catesby was taking an enormous amount of punishment, and it was only the old ringsters who appreciated the deft touch of Catesby's left glove to the other's biceps just before the impact of the blow. It was true the blow landed each time, but each time it was robbed of its power by that touch on the biceps. In the ninth round, three times inside a minute, Catesby's right hooked its twisted arch to the jaw, and three times, Ransom's body, heavy as it was, was levelled to the mat. Each time he took the nine seconds allowed him, and rose to his feet shaken and jarred, but still strong. He had lost much of his speed, and he wasted less effort. He was fighting grimly, but he continued to draw upon his chief asset, which was youth. Catesby's chief asset was experience. As his vitality had dimmed and his vigour abated, he had replaced them with cunning, with wisdom born of the long fights, and with a careful shepherding of strength. Not alone had he learned never

to make a superfluous movement, but he had learned how to seduce an opponent into throwing his strength away. Again and again, by feint of foot, and hand, and body, he continued to inveigle Ransom into leaping back, ducking, or countering. Catesby rested, but he never permitted Ransom to rest. It was the strategy of Age.

sciousness across his mind. For the instant, or for the slightest fraction of an instant, rather, he ceased. In the one moment he saw his opponent ducking out of his field of vision, and the background of white, watching faces; in the next moment he again saw his opponent and the background of faces. It was as if he had slept for a time and just



"He covered his face with his hands."

Early in the tenth round Catesby began stopping the other's rushes with straight lefts to the face, and Ransom, grown wary, responded by drawing the left, then by ducking it and delivering his right in a swinging hook to the side of the head. It was too high up to be vitally effective; but when first it landed, Catesby knew the old familiar descent of the black veil of unconopened his eyes again; and yet the interval of unconsciousness was so microscopically short that there had been no time for him to fall. The audience saw him totter and his knees give, and then saw him recover and tuck his chin deeper into the shelter of his left shoulder.

Several times Ransom repeated the blow, keeping Catesby partially dazed, and then

the latter worked out his defence, which was also a counter. Feinting with his left, he took a half step backward, at the same time upper-cutting with the whole strength of his right. So accurately was it timed that it landed squarely on Ransom's face in the full downward sweep of the duck, and Ransom lifted in the air and curled backward, striking the mat on his head and shoulders. Twice Catesby achieved this, then turned loose and hammered his opponent to the ropes. He gave Ransom no chance to rest nor to set himself, but smashed blow in upon blow, till the house rose to its feet and the air was filled with an unbroken roar of applause. But Ransom's strength and endurance were superb, and he continued to stay on his feet. A knock-out seemed certain, and a captain of police, appalled at the dreadful punishment, arose by the ringside to stop the fight. The gong struck for the end of the round, and Ransom staggered to his corner, protesting to the captain that he was sound and strong. To prove it, he threw two back air-springs, and the police captain gave in.

Catesby, leaning back in his corner and breathing hard, was disappointed. If the fight had been stopped, the referee, perforce, would have rendered him the decision, and the purse would have been his. Unlike Ransom, he was not fighting for glory or career, but for thirty quid. And now Ransom would recuperate in the minute of rest.

Youth will be served! The saying flashed into Catesby's mind, and he remembered the first time he had heard it—the night when he had put away Stowsher Bill. The toff who had bought him a drink after the fight and patted him on the shoulder had used those words. *Youth will be served!* The toff was right. And on that night in the long ago he had been Youth. To-night, Youth sat in the opposite corner. As for himself, he had been fighting for half an hour now, and he was an old man. Had he fought like Ransom, he would not have lasted fifteen minutes. But the point was that he did not recuperate. Those upstanding arteries and that sorely tried heart would not enable him to gather strength in intervals between the rounds. And he had not had sufficient strength in him to begin with. His legs were heavy under him and beginning to cramp. He should not have walked those two miles to the fight. And there was the steak which he had got up longing for that morning. A great and terrible hatred rose up in him for the butchers who had refused him credit. It was hard for an old man to go into a fight without enough to eat. And a piece of steak was such a little thing—a few pennies at best—yet it meant thirty quid to him.

With the gong that opened the eleventh round, Ransom rushed, making a show of freshness which he did not really possess. Catesby knew it for what it was—a bluff as old as the game itself. He clinched to save himself, then, going free, allowed Ransom to get set. This was what Catesby desired. He feinted with his left, drew the answering duck and swinging upward hook, then made the half step backward, delivered the uppercut full to the face, and crumpled Ransom over to the mat. After that he never let him rest, receiving punishment himself, but inflicting far more, smashing Ransom to the ropes, hooking and driving all manner of blows into him, tearing away from his clinches or punching him out of attempted clinches, and, once, when Ransom would have fallen, catching him with one uplifting hand, and with the other immediately smashing him into the ropes where he could not fall.

The house by this time had gone mad, and it was *his* house, nearly every voice yelling: "Go it, Jim!" "Get 'im! Get 'im!" "You've got 'im, Jim! You've got 'im!" It was to be a whirlwind finish, and that was what a ringside audience paid to see.

And Jim Catesby, who for half an hour had conserved his strength, now expended it prodigally in the one great effort he knew he had in him. It was his one chance—now or not at all. His strength was waning fast, and his hope was that, before the last of it ebbed out of him, he would have beaten his opponent down for the count. And as he continued to strike and force, coolly estimating the weight of his blows and the quality of the damage wrought, he realised how hard a man Ransom was to knock out. Stamina and endurance were his to an extreme degree, and they were the virgin stamina and endurance of Youth. Ransom was certainly a coming man. He had it in him. Only out of such rugged fibre were successful fighters fashioned.

Ransom was reeling and staggering, but Jim Catesby's legs were cramping and his knuckles going back on him. Yet he steeled himself to strike the fierce blows, every one of which brought anguish to his tortured hands. Though now he was receiving practically no punishment, he was weakening as rapidly as the other. His blows went home, but there was no longer the weight

behind them, and each blow was the result of a severe effort of will. His legs were like lead, and they dragged visibly under him; while Ransom's backers, cheered by this symptom, began calling encouragement to their man.

Catesby was spurred to a burst of effort. He delivered two blows in succession—a left, a trifle too high, to the solar plexus, and a right cross to the jaw. They were not heavy blows, yet, so weak and dazed was Ransom, that he went down and lay quivering. The referee stood over him, shouting the count of the fatal seconds in his ear. If, before the tenth second were called, he did not rise, the fight was lost. The house stood in hushed silence. Catesby rested on trembling legs. A mortal dizziness was upon him, and before his eyes the sea of faces sagged and swayed, while to his ears, as from a remote distance, came the count of the referee. Yet he looked upon the fight as his. It was impossible that a man so punished could rise.

Only Youth could rise, and Ransom rose. At the fourth second he rolled over on his face and groped blindly for the ropes. By the seventh second he had dragged himself to his knee, where he rested, his head rolling groggily on his shoulders. As the referee cried "Nine!" Ransom stood upright, in proper stalling position, his left arm wrapped about his face, his right wrapped about his stomach. Thus were his vital points guarded, while he lurched forward towards Catesby in the hope of effecting a clinch and gaining more time.

At the instant Ransom arose, Catesby was at him, but the two blows he delivered were muffled on the stalled arms. The next moment Ransom was in the clinch and holding on desperately while the referee strove to drag the two men apart. Catesby helped to force himself free. He knew the rapidity with which Youth recovered, and he knew that Ransom was his if he could prevent that recovery. One stiff punch would do it. Ransom was his, indubitably his. He had out-generalled him, out-fought him, out-pointed him. Ransom reeled out of the clinch, balanced on the hair-line between defeat or survival. One good blow would topple him over and down and out. And Jim Catesby, in a flash of bitterness, remembered the piece of steak, and wished that he had it then behind that necessary punch he must deliver. He nerved himself for the blow, but it was not heavy enough nor swift enough. Ransom swayed, but did not fall, staggering back to the ropes and holding on. Catesby staggered after him and, with a pang like that of dissolution, delivered another blow. But his body had deserted him. All that was left of him was a fighting intelligence that was dimmed and clouded from exhaustion. The blow that was aimed for the jaw struck no higher than the shoulder. He had willed the blow higher, but the tired muscles had not been able to obey. And from the impact of the blow Jim Catesby himself reeled back and nearly fell. Once again he strove. This time his punch missed altogether, and from absolute weakness he fell against Ransom and clinched, holding on to him to save himself from sinking to the floor.

Catesby did not attempt to free himself. He had shot his bolt. He was gone. *And Youth had been served!* Even in the clinch he could feel Ransom growing stronger against him. When the referee thrust them apart, there, before his eyes, he saw Youth recuperate. From instant to instant Ransom grew stronger. His punches, weak and futile at first, became stiff and accurate. Catesby's bleared eyes saw the gloved fist driving at his jaw, and he willed to guard it by interposing his arm. He saw the danger, willed the act, but the arm was too heavy. It seemed burdened with a hundredweight of lead. It would not lift itself, and he strove to lift it with his soul. Then the gloved fist landed home. He experienced a sharp snap that was like an electric spark, and simultaneously the veil of blackness enveloped him.

When he opened his eyes again, he was in his corner, and he heard the yelling of the audience like the roar of the surf at Bondi Beach. A wet sponge was being pressed against the base of his brain, and Sid Sullivan was blowing cold water in a refreshing spray over his face and chest. His gloves had already been removed, and Ransom, bending over him, was shaking his hand. He bore no ill-will toward the man who had put him out, and he returned the grip with a heartiness that made his battered knuckles protest. Then Ransom stepped to the centre of the ring, and the audience hushed its pandemonium to hear him accept young Pronto's challenge, and offer to increase the side bet to one hundred pounds. Catesby looked on apathetically while his seconds mopped the streaming water from him, dried his face, and prepared him to leave the ring. He felt hungry. It was not the ordinary gnawing kind, but a great faintness—a palpitation at the pit of the stomach that communicated

itself to all his body. He remembered back into the fight to the moment when he had Ransom swaying and tottering on the hair-line balance of defeat. Ah, that piece of steak would have done it! He had lacked just that for the decisive blow, and he had lost. It was all because of the piece of steak.

His seconds were half supporting him as they helped him through the ropes. He tore free from them, ducked through the ropes unaided, and leaped heavily to the floor, following on their heels as they forced a passage for him down the crowded centre aisle. Leaving the dressing-room for the street, in the entrance to the hall some young fellow spoke to him.

"W'y didn't yuh go in an' get 'im when yuh 'ad 'im?" the young fellow asked.

"Aw, go to blazes!" said Jim Catesby, and passed down the steps to the side-walk.

The doors of the public-house at the corner were swinging wide, and he saw the lights and the smiling barmaids, heard the many voices discussing the fight, and the prosperous chink of money on the bar. Somebody called to him to have a drink. He hesitated perceptibly, then refused and went on his way.

He had not a copper in his pocket, and the two-mile walk home seemed very long. He was certainly getting old. Crossing the Domain, he sat down suddenly on a bench, unnerved by the thought of the missus sitting up for him, waiting to learn the outcome of the fight. That was harder than any knock-out, and it seemed almost impossible to face.

He felt weak and sore, and the pain of his smashed knuckles warned him that even if he could find a job at navvy work, it would be a week before he could grip a pick-handle or a shovel. The hunger palpitation at the pit of his stomach was sickening. His wretchedness overwhelmed him, and into his eyes came an unwonted moisture. He covered his face with his hands, and, as he cried, he remembered Stowsher Bill and how he had served him that night in the long ago. Poor old Stowsher Bill! He could understand now why he had cried in the dressing-room.

LOVE.

LOVE in summer came my way—
What cared I?
Sunshine filled the golden day,
June was sweeter far than May.
"No one asks you, Love, to stay!
So, good-bye, good-bye!"

Love in autumn careless passed,
Dancing nigh.
All the fields were ripe at last,
Mellow fruit was dropping fast.
"Love, you but a shadow cast!
So, good-bye, good-bye!"

Love in winter bitterly
Wept apart.
All my soul was sad to see—
"Ah, poor Love, you've need of me!
Come, and let your shelter be
In my heart, my heart!"

MARY KERNAHAN HARRIS.

STRIKES.

By J. HOLT SCHOOLING.

THE records kept and periodically issued by the Board of Trade concerning strikes and lock-outs, contain information that should be made known to those concerned in these trade disputes. It may, however, be doubted whether one workman in ten thousand ever sees this Board of Trade volume, and probably but few employers ever look at it.

In the first place, we may give a summary of the trade disputes during the last ten years.

UNITED KINGDOM.—TRADE DISPUTES, 1900–1909.

Year.	Number of Disputes beginning in each Year.	Number of Work-people involved.	Aggregate Duration in Working Days of the Disputes.*
1900	648	189,000	3,153,000
1901	642	180,000	4,142,000
1902	442	257,000	3,479,000
1903	387	117,000	2,339,000
1904	355	87,000	1,484,000
1905	358	93,000	2,470,000
1906	486	218,000	3,029,000
1907	601	147,000	2,162,000
1908	399	295,000	10,834,000
1909	436	301,000	2,774,000
Total . .	4,754	1,884,000	35,866,000

* This column includes some working days for disputes which began in an earlier year than each year named, in cases where the dispute did not end in the year when it began.

We see that, during the last ten years, nearly 5,000 trade disputes occurred, involving nearly 2 millions of work-people, and wasting nearly 36 millions of working days. It is noteworthy that the number of work-people involved in trade disputes in 1909 was the highest recorded since the year 1894.

The duration of these disputes in working days reached a vast total. These millions of days, taken at 300 working days to the year, are equivalent to nearly 120,000 years of working time thrown away. This is for the ten years 1900–1909, and so the average *yearly* waste of working time is nearly 12,000 years. Assuming an average wage of £50 per year, this means an annual loss of wages equal to £600,000.

It is clear that these trade disputes play an important part in our industrial life, even during a period not notably marked by a virulent outbreak of this industrial disease.

Bearing in mind the severe and increasing foreign competition to which our industries are exposed, not only in our home markets, but also in foreign and in British Colonial markets, it is abundantly clear that there is urgent necessity for our employers and our work-people to pull together. Dissension at the source of production—at the mine, the factory, or at the mill—is not only injurious to those concerned in the dispute, but it is also injurious to our national interests.

Classifying the work-people involved in these trade disputes, we obtain the following results :—

NUMBER OF WORK-PEOPLE INVOLVED IN TRADE DISPUTES, CLASSIFIED BY THE VARIOUS OCCUPATIONS, 1900–1909.

Mining and Quarrying	1,047,000
Textile	358,000
Metal, Engineering, and Shipbuilding .	245,000
Building	60,000
Transport	54,000
Clothing	44,000
Miscellaneous Trades	76,000
Total	1,884,000

More than one-half of the work-people involved in trade disputes during the last ten years were working in mines. Mining is an occupation that has greatly increased for many years. The depletion of rural districts has been accompanied by a great increase of the mining population and of the town population. And as our coal mines are largely responsible for the motive power that drives all our other industries, it is not satisfactory to find that mining is so prominently at the head of the list of occupations with regard to strikes.

Fortunately, and despite the great loss of working days and of wages already stated, the number of work-people involved in trade disputes forms but a small proportion of the total number of persons employed in industrial occupations throughout the United Kingdom. In 1909, 3 per cent. of our

total industrial population were involved in trade disputes. In 1908 the proportion was also 3 per cent., as compared with 1.4 per cent. in 1907, and when the facts for the year 1910 are known, it is likely that a further rise will be seen. The proportion of strikers in our population is on the increase.

The proportion was highest in the coal-mining industry, where it was no less than 26 per cent. of the coal workers. The proportion of work-people employed who were involved in strikes was lowest in the building trades.

Most of the trade disputes that occur are of short duration—under one week. Here is a statement relating to the year 1909, which shows the various durations of the trade disputes:—

Duration of Dispute.	Number of Disputes.
Under 1 week	182
1 week and under 2 weeks . .	70
2 weeks ,, 4 ,, . . .	71
4 ,, ,, 6 ,, . . .	29
6 ,, ,, 8 ,, . . .	17
8 ,, ,, 25 ,, . . .	52
25 weeks and longer	15
Total	436

Coming to the causes of these trade disputes, throughout the whole of the last ten years, questions of wages were the principal causes of disputes. And these causes were—

Wages.
Hours of labour.
Employment of particular classes or persons.
Working arrangements.
Trade unionism.
Other causes of disputes.

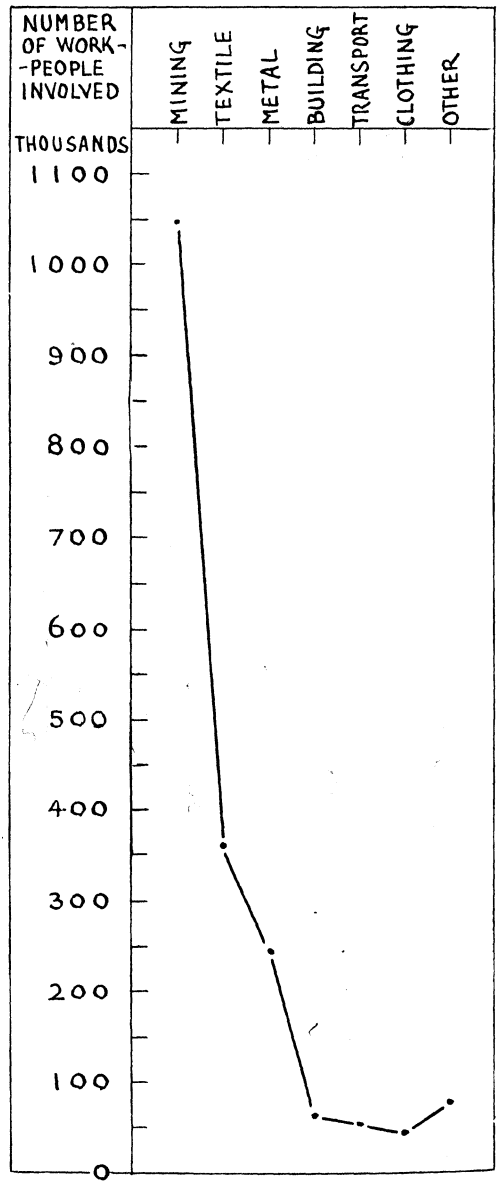
As regards the many disputes on the question of wages, the following facts throw an interesting light upon industrial conditions in this country.

UNITED KINGDOM.—NUMBER OF WORK-PEOPLE INVOLVED IN DISPUTES CAUSED BY A QUESTION OF WAGES, 1900–1909.

Year.	For an Increase of Wages.	Against a Decrease of Wages.	Other Questions of Wages.
1900	57,300	7,400	18,200
1901	19,900	14,900	24,100
1902	15,200	26,100	15,500
1903	14,400	12,000	23,100
1904	5,000	13,600	14,200
1905	13,700	11,400	13,600
1906	58,900	5,400	23,600
1907	25,200	3,800	27,000
1908	16,300	141,600	18,000
1909	13,800	9,800	18,500

The large number of work-people involved in trade disputes arising upon the question of wages, shown in the preceding table, suggests

SHOWING THE GREAT PREDOMINANCE OF COAL-MINING TRADE DISPUTES OVER DISPUTES IN OTHER TRADES.



EXAMPLE. — During 1900–1909, more than one million (1,047,000) workers in mines and quarries were involved in trade disputes.

that, in our industrial economy, one of the effects of the foreign competition our manufacturers have to meet is to weaken

their ability either to increase wages or to avoid a decrease in wages. I am not now dealing with any possible or probable cause of such foreign competition, nor with any suggested remedy for it. The above facts disclose the conditions that exist.

The following Table gives a condensed summary of the facts as regards causes of trade disputes during 1900–1909 :—

UNITED KINGDOM. — CAUSES OF TRADE DISPUTES, 1900–1909. THIS TABLE RELATES TO WORK-PEOPLE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE DISPUTES.

Causes of Trade Disputes.	Number of Work-people directly involved in Disputes due to each Cause.	Proportion per 1,000 of Work-people directly involved in Disputes due to each Cause.
I. Wages :—		
Against a decrease . .	246,000	199
For an increase . . .	240,000	194
Other wages disputes .	196,000	159
Total, wages . . .	682,000	552
II. Hours of labour :—		
For a decrease . . .	11,000	9
Other disputes . . .	111,000	90
Total, hours of labour.	122,000	99
III. Trade unionism . .	184,000	149
IV. Working arrangements	128,000	104
V. Employment of particular classes or persons	96,000	78
VI. Other causes . . .	22,000	18
Total number of work-people directly involved	1,234,000	1,000

NOTE.—This Table relates only to work-people *directly* involved in trade disputes. The Table at the beginning of this article includes work-people directly and indirectly involved.

We see that the leading cause of a dispute was "against a decrease of wages." This cause affected nearly one quarter of a million work-people, or 199 per 1,000 work-people involved in trade disputes—practically one-fifth of their number.

This fact is rather significant, for a proposal for a decrease of wages comes from the employer, not from the employed. And when our home industries are in a flourishing condition, yielding a fair profit to employers and a fair wage to the persons employed, there is no reason for, nor any likelihood of, a proposal for a decrease of wages being made by employers.

The results at which we are now looking relate to our home trade and industries much more largely than they concern our foreign trade. And this notable result just now shown, relating to the predominance of a proposal for decrease of wages as the leading cause of trade disputes, tends in the direction of suggesting that, at any rate, during the last decade, our home trade and industry have not been in a flourishing condition.

Confirmation of this view is given when we note the cause of second importance is "for an increase of wages," because, given a flourishing home trade, there should not be the obstacle against an increase of wages which is suggested by the fact that, during 1900–1909, no fewer than 194 per 1,000 of the work-people affected by trade disputes were connected with this cause of a trade dispute.

We see that all questions of wages were responsible as causes of trade disputes affecting no fewer than 552 per 1,000 of the work-people involved in the disputes.

"Hours of labour" disputes affected 99 per 1,000 work-people—10 per cent. "Trade unionism" disputes affected 149 per 1,000 work-people involved.

As regards the results of these trade disputes, a notable feature is the small proportion of work-people who were successful in disputes caused by a wages question —in 1909 only 10 per cent. of them were successful, and 41 per cent. of the work-people were unsuccessful, the disputes ending in favour of the employers. The balance, 49 per cent., effected compromises, or, in a few cases, the dispute was not settled.

Taking all the disputes, however caused, during the last ten years, the average results were as follows—

	Per cent.*
Settled in favour of the employers .	32
Settled in favour of the work-people .	27
Compromised or unsettled	41
Total	100

* Computed upon the basis of the work-people directly involved in the disputes.

Thus not only do these trade disputes result more in favour of the employers than in favour of the work-people, but, also, the latter lose a vast amount of wages—a loss, approximately, of £600,000 per year.

We come now to an interesting and important feature of these trade disputes—namely, the mode by which these disputes were ended.

The following Tables show how the 4,754 trade disputes that occurred during the years 1900–1909 were settled. These disputes

relate to 1,234,000 work-people directly involved in them.

UNITED KINGDOM.—METHODS OF SETTLEMENT OF THE TRADE DISPUTES THAT OCCURRED DURING 1900–1909. THIS TABLE RELATES TO THE NUMBER OF DISPUTES.

Method of Settlement.	Number of Trade Disputes settled by each Method.	Percentage of Disputes settled by each Method.
By direct arrangement or negotiation between the parties or their representatives	3,237	68·1
By replacement of work-people	613	12·9
By return to work on employers' terms without negotiation . . .	441	9·3
By conciliation or mediation	209	4·4
By arbitration	183	3·8
By closing of works. . .	49	1·0
Otherwise (including disputes not settled). . .	22	0·5
Total number of disputes .	4,754	100·0

UNITED KINGDOM.—METHODS OF SETTLEMENT OF THE TRADE DISPUTES THAT OCCURRED DURING 1900–1909. THIS TABLE RELATES TO THE NUMBER OF WORK-PEOPLE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE DISPUTES.

Method of Settlement.	Number of Work-people directly involved in Disputes settled by each Method.	Proportion per 1,000 of Work-people directly involved in Disputes settled by each Method.
By direct arrangement or negotiation between the parties or their representatives	785,000	636
By conciliation or mediation.	254,000	206
By return to work on employers' terms without negotiation . . .	85,000	69
By arbitration	71,000	58
By replacement of work-people	30,000	24
By closing of works . .	6,000	5
Otherwise (including disputes not settled) . .	3,000	2
Total number of work-people directly involved .	1,234,000	1,000

NOTE.—This Table relates only to work-people *directly* involved in trade disputes. The Table at the beginning of this article includes work-people directly and indirectly involved.

By far the most effective mode of terminating trade disputes during the last decade has been by means of "direct arrangement or negotiation between the parties" concerned in the dispute. This result is to be expected, for no outside person can be so well acquainted with the conditions upon which disputes arise as are the employers and the work-people who fall out. This natural mode of settlement ended 68 per 100 of the disputes that occurred during 1900–1909, and it related to 636 per 1,000 of the work-people directly involved.

Second in importance, as a method of ending trade disputes, comes the "replacement of work-people." This mode ended nearly 13 per 100 of the disputes that took place, and it related to no fewer than 613 disputes. The number of work-people involved by this mode of settlement was not so important as the number of disputes involved, but no fewer than 30,000 work-people lost their jobs owing to trade disputes being ended by the "replacement of work-people."

The third mode of settlement was "return to work on employers' terms without negotiation." This method ended 9·3 per 100 of the disputes that occurred, and it affected 69 per 1,000 of the work-people involved.

The method of "conciliation or mediation" ranks fourth. By this means, 4·4 per 100 of the disputes during 1900–1909 were ended. The number of work-people affected by this way of ending trade disputes was considerable, namely, 206 per 1,000 involved in disputes. One cause of this high proportion is that some important disputes in the engineering, shipbuilding, and cotton trades were settled by the mediation of third parties.

Of the less important modes of settling trade disputes, we may note that the "closing of works" ended 1 per 100 of the disputes during the last decade, affecting 6,000 work-people.

The results herein shown evidence a regrettable source of weakness in our industrial activities. This country needs all its workers, masters and men alike, to work together in amity, not to dispute with each other. And in this connection it is impossible to regard otherwise than most injurious to national welfare the violent and inflammatory speeches that too often characterise present-day party politics. Nothing but injury to individuals and to the nation can come from the rash incitement of class antagonism.

LORD STRANLEIGH, PHILANTHROPIST.

By ROBERT BARR.

III. "MY LIBRARY WAS DUKEDOM LARGE ENOUGH."

LORD STRANLEIGH of Wychwood rarely allowed any expression of annoyance to escape him, but one morning at breakfast, on opening his favourite daily paper, an item that caught his eye caused him so far to forget himself that he gave utterance to the phrase—

"Dash it all!"

It says much for the training of Ponderby, who was waiting upon him, that this excellent servant never moved a muscle on hearing the unaccustomed exclamation. Whatever astonishment Ponderby felt was very effectually concealed. Stranleigh said to him, more peremptorily than usual—

"I wish, Ponderby, you would be so obliging as to telegraph my agent, Wilson, asking him to take the first London train, and call on me here before luncheon."

"Very good, my lord," replied Ponderby, departing on his mission.

After his master had finished breakfast, Ponderby turned to the newspaper page that had aroused this unwonted exhibition of feeling, and had little difficulty in finding the item which he knew had displeased his lordship. The paragraph ran as follows:—

"Mr. Peter Barnacle has promised to build a library in Stranleigh village, if the inhabitants will provide a site for the building. As all property in the vicinity belongs to Lord Stranleigh of Wychwood, there is little doubt that a beautiful plot of land will be offered by his lordship, so that advantage may be taken of this munificence."

Ponderby read the paragraph twice with slightly puckered brows, as if failing to understand why the extract should have caused annoyance. It seemed very good indeed of Mr. Barnacle to provide for the mental enjoyment of that delightful old English village, but, instead of being thankful, Lord Stranleigh had gone to the extreme of saying "Dash it all!" As Ponderby carefully folded up the newspaper and put it away, he murmured to himself—

"I wish I 'ad his money." But whether this referred to Mr. Barnacle or Lord Stranleigh, we shall never know, for Ponderby rarely confided in anyone.

The young nobleman returned home at eleven o'clock, and half an hour later Wilson, the agent, put in an appearance. Wilson was a very brisk, business-like man, with a hard face, a lowering brow, and lips which had a touch of tyranny about them. Although obsequious enough to Stranleigh, he was very domineering to those over whom he exerted power, and was generally disliked by villagers and tenants. It was his boast that he stood no nonsense from that class of people, and his attitude was one of protection so far as Stranleigh was concerned, not concealing the fact that, but for him, his lordship would be robbed right and left. If any of the tenants ventured to appeal to Stranleigh direct, under a sense of oppression, that tenant was almost certain to meet misfortune in his future career, although it was rarely possible to trace calamity to Wilson himself.

Lord Stranleigh was, perhaps, unduly lenient on these occasions, for whoever came to him with a hard-luck story found complaint promptly and favourably attended to; but as Wilson became better known, these appeals to Cæsar were less and less frequent. Although Stranleigh himself felt an instinctive distaste for Wilson's society, and more than once had reproved him for his lack of sympathy with the tenants, and occasionally had even determined to dismiss him, he recognised his good business qualities. Besides that, he shrank from displacing any man in the Stranleigh service, except on irrefragable proofs of dishonesty or unfairness, so Wilson stayed on year by year.

"Good morning, Wilson. I telegraphed to you because of an item in to-day's paper. Is it true that Mr. Barnacle has offered a library to Stranleigh village?"

"Yes, my lord, I believe it is."

"You *believe?* Aren't you sure?"

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"Yes, my lord, I am sure."

"Then why did you not write to me about it?"

"I didn't know that it would interest your lordship."

"Anything pertaining to the estate interests me, and I dislike reading in the newspapers information that should already be in my possession about my own affairs. Is it not a fact that there is a very well-selected library now housed in the village hall, the books of which are at the free disposal of all inhabitants?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Did the villagers apply to Mr. Barnacle themselves?"

"I believe they did, my lord. A public meeting was held some months ago, at which it was stated that the books at the village hall had all been read over and over again, and it was unanimously voted that application should be made to Mr. Barnacle. After some investigation, that gentleman agreed to build and equip a library."

"I see. Did anyone propose application to me?"

"I think not, my lord."

"Do you know why?"

"Well, I suppose they did not wish to trouble your lordship, as you had already done a great deal for the village."

"That's all very well, Wilson, but I think you should have looked after my affairs a little more closely than has been the case, and I ought to have been communicated with, as lord of the manor, before an appeal was made to a stranger."

"It never occurred to me that Mr. Barnacle would consent, because Stranleigh village is rather an unimportant hamlet. Still, your lordship has now an opportunity of assisting. It is proposed that a delegation wait upon you for the purpose of obtaining a site, which is one of Mr. Barnacle's provisos. It is suggested that you donate that plot of grass land at the head of High Street, under the hill where the road turns to the left."

"I see. Which means that there will be built a blatant, red-brick, red-tiled piece of architectural modernity dominating the High Street, and completely out of keeping with the rest of the village. Suppose, then, I refuse the request of the delegation?"

Wilson shrugged his shoulders.

"In that case, my lord, you will effectually put an end to the project."

"Quite so, Wilson. I hope you see now into what a predicament you have placed me. If I give the ground, I shall spoil the village, and if I refuse, all the newspapers in the country will hold me up to scorn as the tyrannical landlord, quite callous regarding the culture of the people. I shall be charged with keeping them in the dark, so that they may vote in consonance with my own ignorance."

"Adverse comment may be very easily prevented, my lord."

"It could have been prevented easily if you had taken action in time, but I am not going to interfere with the liberty of the British Press. I believe we have some rather strenuous Socialists in Stranleigh village."

"Yes, my lord, we have. There are at least half a dozen who should have been packed off the place months ago. I can do it yet if you give me permission."

"Oh, bless you, no! I am rather by way of being a Socialist myself. Indeed, I have allowed free use of the village hall, and I supply the reading-room with all the Socialistic journals I can find. Were the Socialists, as I suspect, leaders in this new plan?"

"They have taken a very active part in it, my lord."

"Very well, Wilson. You will return to Stranleigh village, and convene the inhabitants thereof in the public hall. Apologise to them for my neglect in allowing the present library to become out of date, and tell them I am in full sympathy with their desire for improvement. By the way, do you know how much Mr. Barnacle intended to spend on this building?"

"I am not sure, my lord, but I think something like three thousand pounds."

"Well, that is very good of him, so I beg you to have drafted a most cordial letter of thanks, declining the donation. This should be signed by yourself and by all the villagers. You may then announce that I will allot five thousand pounds for the building, because I wish to approve of the plans, and be assured that the library is in keeping with the rest of the village, as nearly as modern construction can compare with the excellent architecture of two or three centuries ago. I will donate the piece of land you suggest, and provide an ample supply of books, both ancient and modern.

"The ancient books will be largely of my own selection, but I request you to write to every publisher in London for his catalogue, and these catalogues I wish placed on a table in the reading-room of the village hall. As it is the villagers themselves who complain

of lack of modernity in our present selection, ask them to be good enough to examine these lists, and let each place his initials before whatever book he wishes. All these volumes I will buy and send down to you. I shall also set aside and invest a capital sum of money, the interest of which will keep this library going for ever, the income being sufficient to pay for all clerical work, repairs, and additional volumes as they are issued."

Wilson hesitated.

"I think, my lord, we run some risk of offending Mr. Barnacle, who has been very generous in the matter. If you allow him to go on with this scheme, I would see to it that the next proposal made by the villagers is submitted directly to you."

"I am quite sure Mr. Barnacle will take no offence if you write him a courteous and tactful letter. Everything depends on that, Wilson. Tell him that he has spurred me to action, and thank him on my behalf for doing so. It is the outsider who sees most of the game, and I am very grateful to him for pointing out a way which apparently I should have taken long ago.

"Meanwhile, set about obtaining plans from some of our best architects, not neglecting to give the younger men a chance. I think I would rather not have a competition. I will suggest some names, and you can add others. Photographs of Stranleigh village might be taken and sent out with your request for plans. Secure at first a series of sketches, for all of which you will pay. I shall make a selection from these sketches, and then you may ask the architects to visit Stranleigh village, at my expense, examine the site and estimate its capabilities, afterwards supplying detailed plans and elevations, and naming their own fees for this work."

Wilson protested that such terms were unduly generous—quite unnecessarily so, he maintained—but Stranleigh replied drily that all he asked of Wilson was that he should carry out the scheme as outlined, seeing that everyone working in connection with it was duly recompensed. Wilson, overruled, begged his lordship's pardon if he displayed too much zeal, giving, as an excuse, the plea that he thought continually of his lordship's interests, there being, it seemed, so many outsiders who wished to take advantage.

"That's all right," said his lordship airily. "The advantage-takers are in reality the rich man's best friends, for they continually strive to make possible his entrance to the kingdom of Heaven. What is a rich man for, if not to be taken advantage of? Although the wealthy may not be appreciated in Paradise, they get more than their share of attention in this world, and thus we strike a balance. However, Wilson, let us, as practical men, adhere to this mundane sphere and leave Paradise alone for the present.

"Frankly, I dislike having my hand forced, as is the case with this library, and I consider you have neglected your duty in allowing an unnecessary agitation to reach a point of finality without acquainting me. Stranleigh village, with its small population, needs a new library just as much as our farm carts need three wheels each. Still, there's no use in growling over spilt milk. Make out a deed of gift transferring the plot of land to whatever authority takes charge of the new institution, but insert a proviso that, should the plot of land be used for any other purpose than that which we have in view, it reverts once more to the estate. You may draw on me to the extent of five thousand pounds; but if the cost of the building exceeds that sum, let me know, and I will supply the deficit."

With this, Wilson took his departure, and Stranleigh speedily forgot all about the matter.

It would be ridiculous to assert that a young athlete like Stranleigh lacked the physique to pursue the London season to its bitter end. Although there was certainly an air of great indifference in his manner, he was quite free from that intellectual languor which causes a man to look down upon what is termed "the frivolity of Society." He always regretted his own lack of cleverness, and admitted shamefacedly that many features of the London season he thoroughly enjoyed, such as polo at Ranelagh, cricket at Lord's, and most of the races. Besides, he knew that London expects every man to do his duty in a country where the women outnumber the men, so Stranleigh, in addition to being an occasional host, was an indefatigable guest.

The beginning of May saw him enter London's season with the very best intentions, determined not to weary in well-doing till July was ended. He plunged manfully into the social maelstrom, no one more eager to please, or, what is especially valued in London society, no one so easily pleased. Nevertheless, just as the London season was at its height, Stranleigh began to see visions.

Sometimes these dreams would picture to him a rock-environed, sea-coast bay, with a little fishing village on its margin, but more

often the mirage represented a secluded spot in the forest of Stranleigh Park, where, in a green glade, crystal waters came tumbling over rocks, and, running rapidly and merrily through woods and meadows, formed one of the choicest trout streams that a fisherman could wish to cast a line upon.

Young Blake, the secretary, always made allowance for these visions, and prepared for them. Towards the middle of each June Blake's communications with the world of fashion changed purport, from "Lord Stranleigh is delighted to accept" to "The Earl of Stranleigh regrets he is unable," and thus he was prepared for the inevitable annual question—

"I say, Blake, how many invitations have I accepted for next week?"

"None, my lord."

"Good. Nothing to prevent me from running down to Stranleigh Park?"

"Nothing, my lord."

"All right. I'll spend the week-end there, at least."

Blake always smiled at this.

"You needn't grin, Mr. Blake. I'm not actuated by sentiment, as you appear to think—a visit to the ancestral home, one's cherished birthplace, and all that sort of thing. No. I can enjoy there what is quite impossible in London—an old and very disreputable suit of knickerbockers, so dilapidated that, if worn outside the limits of Stranleigh Park, I should run a risk of being arrested as a vagrant. Once at Stranleigh, I may not return to London at once. Blake, you're grinning again! It's a bad habit. Avoid it. Truth is, I've got some new fishing tackle that I wish to test. I love an old stream, old clothes, and new tackle. Besides, by the lassitude that's coming over Ponderby, I know he wishes to visit his relatives, though he will sacrifice himself as long as I stay in London. It seems ludicrous to think of Ponderby having relatives, but we must take his word for it. So, on my behalf, strike a sort of social balance-sheet and close the books. See that no letters are sent on, and then get off yourself. Where are you going this year? Switzerland, the Pyrenees, or does high living prescribe Marienbad?"

"Oh, it doesn't matter about me, my lord."

"Of course not. But where?"

"Well, a friend of mine has a nice little yacht, and we were thinking of the Norwegian fiords."

"The yacht isn't fitted with wireless, is it?"

"No, my lord—quite a modest sailing craft that we work ourselves."

"Excellent—excellent! Couldn't be better. No possibility of our communicating with one another. Good luck to you!"

The same afternoon the young nobleman arrived by train at Stranleigh station, a good four miles from the village of that name. There was no one to meet him, for he had come unannounced and without impedimenta. Striking across country, and walking through forest and field, mostly over his own property, at last he saw Stranleigh Manor House, nestling in the upper part of a well-wooded valley, sheltered on three sides from the winds.

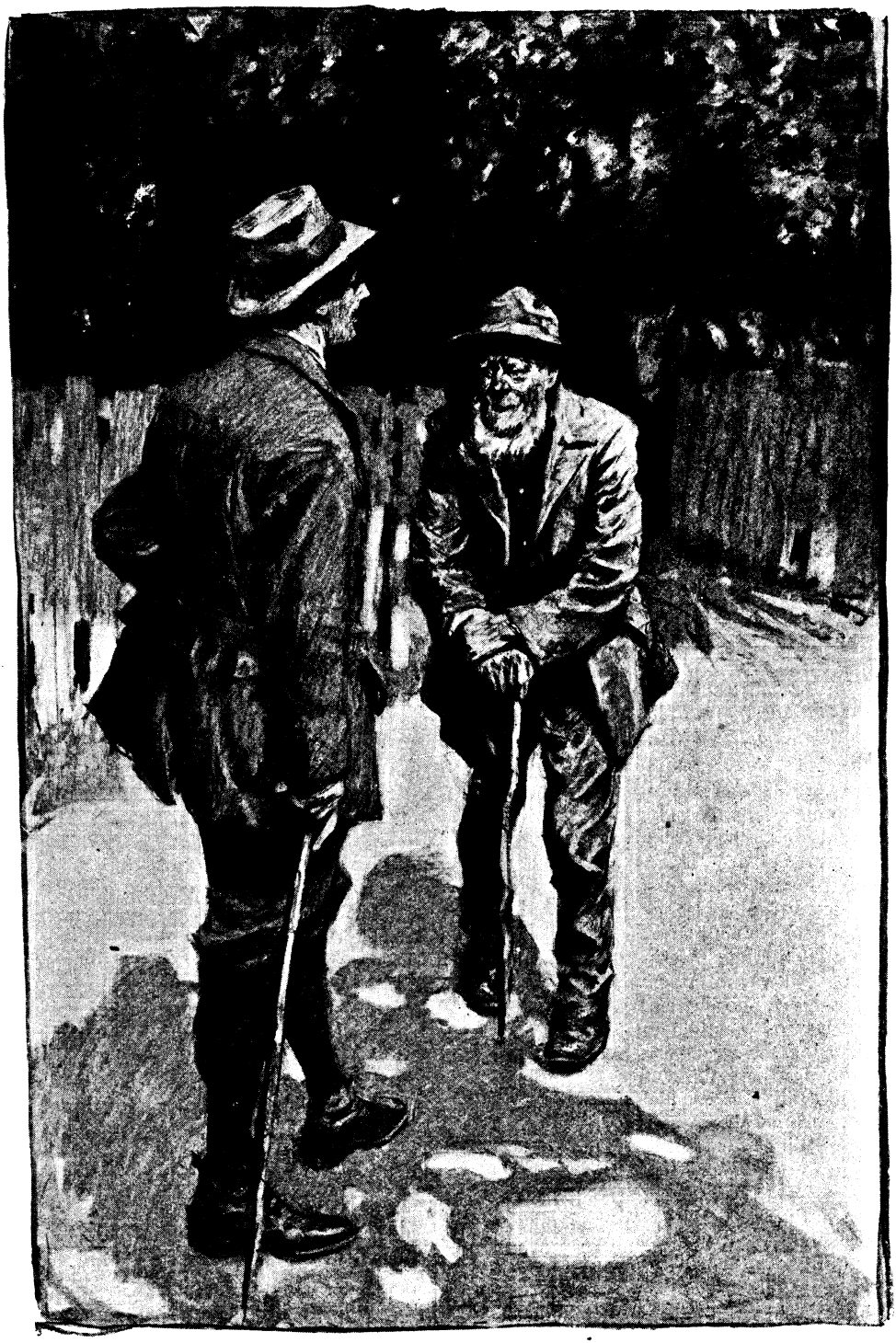
Stranleigh had tramped over the hills, and now stood for a few minutes enjoying the view from the highest part of his estate. Half a mile further down the valley, along the banks of the stream, lay the rural village, quaint with its grey stone, ivy-covered walls and thatched roofs, while above it rose the grey, square Norman tower of the old church. From the end of the High Street, up through the trees, came an unaccustomed note of colour, which, except for its steadiness, looked like the blurred suggestion of a fire. Stranleigh knitted his brow, wondering what it was; then, walking down the path towards the house, the view became more distinct, and he saw a two-storied building of very red brick, covered with equally red tiles. Then, suddenly he remembered the new public library, and realised that his own money had placed there this violent contrast to the subdued hue of the ancient village.

"I wish I had built it with stone," he said, with a sigh. "By Jove, I'll do it yet, or else cover it with plaster!"

He entered his house, went to his room, and arrayed himself in the disreputable knickerbockers and ancient Norfolk jacket of Harris tweed. Under the collar of his grey flannel shirt he tied a frayed scarlet cravat, then surveyed his full-length reflection in the pier-glass with an expression of satisfaction. The best-dressed man in London was now an excellent representation of a tramp.

"My tailor would have a fit if he could see me, and I should need to explain that this Anarchist neck-tie is to place me *en rapport* with the new library."

Passing down the carriage drive which wound among the trees, partially hiding the house from the King's highway, he entered the main street of the village at its lower end, and there received, like a slap in the



"'They must be ignorant folk up in London.'"

face, the full effect of the brilliant edifice, apparently built to cross the road at the upper end.

As Stranleigh gazed up the street with stern disapproval on his face, he murmured to himself—

"I am either confoundedly stupid, or Fate has turned against me. I spend five thousand pounds to help on the culture of the neighbourhood, and merely succeed in spoiling the prettiest village in England. That blatant building must be replaced."

At this point he was accosted by the oldest inhabitant, Samuel Nubbins, whose bent, shrunken figure was supported by a thick stick.

"Welcome 'ome, my lord," said Nubbins cordially; and as the ancient used the title in every sentence he spoke, it will be omitted in recording his conversation.

"Good evening, Mr. Nubbins! How are you? You seem to be the only one of us who never grows older."

"I be main old, and I've lived to see great improvements in my time, please Heaven. I never expected to live long enough to see so grand a house as that put up in Stranleigh village."

"Neither did I," replied the young man grimly.

"It be wonderful what rich men do for us in these days," continued Nubbins.

"It is, indeed. I understand you asked for the library."

"Yes. But the idea would never have come to me; I be too old and stupid."

"You do yourself an injustice, Mr. Nubbins. You are old, and very, very wise, and I rejoice to hear that the scheme originated with someone else. Who was that brilliant person?"

"We had public meetings—two or three on 'em. All was in favour."

"I dare say," concurred Stranleigh. "I've yet to hear of a public meeting that's not in favour of getting something for nothing. But who was the moving spirit?"

"Why, Bill Perkins had more to do with it than anyone else, and people are not so hard on Bill as they used to be, 'cause he stood up for our good."

"What—Bill Perkins, the poacher?"

"Well, they do say he poached now and then, but, after all, it's never been proved."

"No. I admire Bill's dexterity in setting traps so successfully, and never getting into one himself, but William as an advocate of literature rather amazes me. He'll be proposing to go to Oxford next."

"I dare say he's been there. He's a great traveller, is Bill, and when things get a bit hot in one neighbourhood——" Old Nubbins checked himself, finding he was verging on slander. The character of the estimable Perkins seemed to have improved. Nubbins changed the subject abruptly.

"At the last meeting we passed a unanimous vote of thanks to Mr. Peter Barnacle for his great kindness to us. They do say he have a pot of money."

"Then it is Mr. Barnacle who has been so generous about the library?"

"Oh, yes!" replied Samuel, surprised that such important doings in Stranleigh village should be unknown in London. "We've had brisk times with them workmen here, and there wasn't a room to let in the place—all taken up. They opened a branch of a bank at the post-office, and a clerk came down from county town every Friday, to pay off the men. But they're all gone now, worse luck. Rare times we did have!"

"Then the library is finished?"

"Yes. 'Twill be opened next Wednesday."

"Really?"

"Why, haven't you seen the bills? They're posted all over the place. Mr. Peter Barnacle is to make a speech, and your own agent, Mr. Wilson, will introduce him, and there's Bill Perkins's name in big letters."

"You astonish me. Is Bill to be there?"

"Yes. His name is printed out 'Mr. William Perkins,' and he's going to give an address on what books have done for him."

"Ah! And what have books done for him?"

"I suppose Bill means to tell us that on Wednesday. A good speaker is Bill, and fond o' reading, they say, along of being alone by himself——"

"On other people's property?" suggested Stranleigh.

"He's on your property now," said the conscientious Nubbins.

"I can well believe it."

"But he's within his rights, for Mr. Wilson, he made a gamekeeper of him."

"The deuce you say! Set a thief to catch a thief, eh? I am learning a good deal since I left London this morning."

"Ah, they must be ignorant folk up in London."

"They are, Mr. Nubbins. Good evening to you. Thank you for your conversation, which I have enjoyed very much."

Nubbins beamed with gratification as he hobbled away, and Stranleigh walked up the street to the new library building. He was

astonished to see, carved in a stone over the door—

THE BARNACLE LIBRARY.
Erected 1910.

The windows and doors of the red structure were all open, as if to allow the plaster to dry, but Stranleigh did not enter. He strolled down the road to the post-office, and sent away several telegrams to London. This done, he continued his walk to the gates of the park; but instead of going uphill to the Manor House, he deflected his course until he came to the residence occupied by Wilson, where he knocked at the door.

A deferential servant showed him into the drawing-room, and presently Mrs. Wilson appeared—an anxious-looking, middle-aged woman, not long recovered from a serious illness, if one might judge from the pallor of her countenance. She was undoubtedly much perturbed at thus unexpectedly meeting Lord Stranleigh, and it was with difficulty she could repress her agitation.

"Good evening, Mrs. Wilson. I came down from London to-day, and just dropped in to see your husband."

"I am sorry he is not at home, my lord."

"Ah, well," said Stranleigh, rising, "it dosen't matter. Do you expect him back to-night?"

"No, my lord; he will not return till Wednesday morning." Then, seeing Stranleigh's look of astonishment, she added: "Mr. Wilson has had much to do with the new library, and I understood it was with your permission."

"Oh, quite with my permission, Mrs. Wilson, and really his absence makes no difference. I suppose you have his address, where I could telegraph him?"

"He did not leave an address. All I know is that he went to Manchester, and will return on Wednesday morning with Mr. Peter Barnacle, for he has ordered the carriage to meet them at Stranleigh station. They are to inspect the library privately, then come here for lunch, and in the afternoon the public opening takes place."

"I see. A most excellent arrangement."

"Perhaps, my lord, you would honour us by lunching here with Mr. Barnacle?"

Stranleigh, still standing, glanced down with a smile at his faded knickerbockers.

"I am no fit guest, Mrs. Wilson, for any well-ordered household. I have fled from London to avoid formal luncheons and dinners, and especially to evade model, respectable people like Mr. Barnacle. My lunch on Wednesday will be a sandwich or two in the woods by the side of the stream."

The young man did not fail to observe that an expression of relief passed over the haggard countenance of Mrs. Wilson. Hesitatingly she asked a question.

"Have you—have you come from London to attend the opening of the library on Wednesday?"

"No, I knew nothing of it. I came, as I intimated, to loaf around the fields and woods."

"Then you will not be at the ceremony?"

"Oh, I intend to be there, certainly, but *incog.* I am slightly interested in hearing Mr. Barnacle's speech, and feverishly eager to learn what books have done for Bill Perkins. I shall slip into the new building and take a seat at the back, so shabbily clothed that, if anyone recognises me, he will not acknowledge the acquaintanceship."

This announcement was evidently not so welcome as his refusal of the invitation to lunch. It was plain that Mrs. Wilson was in an agony of apprehension, and Stranleigh, noticing this, went on in his most nonchalant fashion.

"You will tell Mr. Wilson that I called, but add that it was about nothing in particular. I merely wished to let him know I should be here for a week or two. Please make it perfectly clear that his absence is of no consequence whatever. Beg him not to neglect his distinguished guest merely because I am here, and tell him that if there is anything I can do to further the festivities, he must let me know. Good night, Mrs. Wilson. I fear I am keeping my dinner waiting up at the Manor, and thus causing my good housekeeper unnecessary anxiety. Good night."

She gave him a limp hand, and the young man left with cheerful jauntiness, betraying no hint of his suspicions.

Up at the Manor House the table had been laid, by his instructions, not in the large dining-room, but in the much smaller, snug study, of which he was rather fond. Already one telegram had arrived, and was lying beside his plate. He tore open the envelope and read—

"Amount requisitioned by Wilson for library on Thursday, February 28th, was five thousand pounds. This being approved by you, cheque for that amount posted to Wilson, Tuesday, March 1st, and deposited by him in Cutler's Bank, Manchester, on Thursday, March 3rd."

When he had partaken of dinner, two

other telegrams arrived, which showed one advantage of being the great man of the place, for the village telegraph office was kept open, and these messages despatched to the Manor House after the closing hours ordained by the British Government. The telegrams showed that certain official machinery had been set in motion in response to requests made by the Earl of Stranleigh.

There was a discreet knock at the study door.

"Can you see Mrs. Wilson, my lord?"

"Certainly. Show the lady in."

Mrs. Wilson was evidently deeply distressed, and the endeavour to conceal her agitation was only partially successful.

"I am very much worried, my lord, and that must be my apology for intruding upon you."

"It is no intrusion at all, Mrs. Wilson. I am glad to see you again. I am accustomed to plenty of company, and the old Manor House is lonelier than I expected. Please take this arm-chair. I can guarantee its comfort. Now, tell me what is troubling you."

"I know nothing very definite," she said, "and perhaps my husband could make everything clear; but he never confides in me now, and I am filled with fear. He has acted rather strangely for the past three months, being excited and irritable—not to be questioned."

"That is only natural. This is a large estate, and its administration involves a great deal of work. Then, for the last three months, additional labour has been placed on his shoulders in overseeing the new library."

The woman gave a gasp, then said—

"May I ask you a question or two, my lord? It is none of my business, of course, and, if it is inexpedient for me to know, you need not reply."

"I shall answer anything you ask."

"A large cheque came to my husband about three months ago. I did not see the cheque itself, but I found the letter that accompanied it, and saw it should have been deposited in our County Bank. I have reason to believe it was deposited in Manchester, although I don't know where."

"Oh, that's all right. It was placed in Cutler's Bank, Manchester, on March 3rd."

"You knew of that, then?"

"Yes."

"The letter said the money was for the library, but I understood that Mr. Barnacle paid for the new building."

"Well, you see, Mrs. Wilson, it's a sort of co-operative affair. I gave the land, Barnacle puts up the building, and then I'm going to present the bulk of the books. Now, it is quite natural that money to put up a library should be deposited in a Manchester bank, because Manchester contains one of the most beautiful libraries in the world, built and equipped by private generosity. You evidently think something is amiss. Even if that should be so, I give you my word I shall take no action in the matter. Thus, you see, there is nothing to fear.

"I noticed this evening that you seemed uneasy when I spoke of attending the function on Wednesday, and so resolved not to go. When the festivities are finished, tell your husband I called, and ask him to pay me a visit at this hour on Wednesday night, as I wish to consult him about several matters relating to the estate."

The careworn woman departed after embarrassing him with her thanks. Stranleigh sat down again, deep in thought.

"Of course," he said to himself, "Wilson stole the five thousand, and her warning will give him time to bolt. He can be over in France or off to America before a slack man like me raises a hue and cry. He'll desert her, but I will grant her a pension, and that may be some consolation."

Imagine Stranleigh's astonishment when, at nine o'clock on Wednesday evening, he learned that Mr. Wilson wished to see him. On being shown into the study, the agent bade his master a curt "Good evening," but made no offer to shake hands. Without being invited, he helped himself to a chair, which he drew up to the table.

When he was announced, Stranleigh expected to meet an exaggeration of that cringing manner which always distinguished Wilson's approach when he knew he had done wrong, but in this, again, he was disappointed. The agent wore an air of bravado, not to say truculence and defiance.

"My wife says you want to see me. What for?"

"Oh, merely a little matter of curiosity on my part, Wilson," replied Stranleigh, with nonchalance. "Whose money did you steal—Barnacle's or mine?"

"That's a stupid question to ask," commented Wilson.

"You deny the theft, then?"

"I wasn't thinking of the theft; I was thinking of the question. Nobody but an ass would put it."

"Why?"



"'Whose money did you steal—Barnacle's or mine?'"

"Because Barnacle ventured three thousand pounds while you risked five thousand, therefore, as I couldn't steal both sums, I naturally secured the larger. Any fool could have told you that."

"I see. Then I'm the victim?"

"Certainly."

"Well, for cool cheek, I think that beats the record!"

"No, it is only your muddle-headedness that beats the record. With the complacency of a conceited, selfish simpleton, you force a business man like myself into an impossible position. After things had gone so far, I couldn't write to Barnacle and tell him the deal was off. I knew that any appeal to you would be futile, because reasoning doesn't appeal to a brain the calibre of yours."

"I quite understand. I think the phrase 'drivelling idiot' would comprise all the epithets you have hurled at me, so we'll let

it go at that. Cut the cackle and come to the 'osses. Common-sense having no effect on this idiot, what did you do?"

"I allowed an old fool to build the library, and put aside the money of the young fool until this was done, and I could safely return it to him."

"Return it!" cried Stranleigh in amazement.

"What else?" Wilson drew a note-book from his inside pocket, extracted a cheque, and tossed the document over to Stranleigh, who opened it in dazed fashion, and saw it was payable to his order for five thousand and seventy-five pounds.

"Why the seventy-five pounds?" he asked.

"Interest for three months at six per cent. In most of your investments you get only four, you know."

"In handing me a cheque which doubtless will be returned dishonoured, you hope to gain time, and so, as we used to say at school, make a bunk for it to the Continent. You are putting yourself to needless trouble, Wilson. I had already determined to take no action in the matter."

"You are very good!" sneered Wilson. "Truth to tell, I thought of doing as you suggest, but what with the telegraph and improved communication all over the world, I concluded it wasn't worth the risk. It would have been a joke to pull out my four hundred and fifty thousand from Cutler's Bank before this cheque was presented; but, as it is, I'm buying a small estate next to your own, and investing the rest of the money in reliable securities which will give me an income even larger than I need. I'm fond of this part of the world, and love the simplicity of country life as compared with the guile and chicanery of the city."

Lord Stranleigh laughed heartily.

"Virtuous man!" he cried. "How did you make all that money?"

"Rubber," replied Wilson. "Your five thousand pounds were changed into twenty-five thousand during the first week, sold and reinvested, and I continued the game almost to the present moment. Now I'm going to settle down and devote my spare time to the invention and construction of a spring wheel that will render rubber tyres useless for automobiles."

Again Stranleigh laughed.

"Speaking of the guilefulness of cities," he said, "I have secured a two-thirds majority on the board controlling the lovely scarlet building you opened to-day. The first act will be to inaugurate an industrial school in the new edifice, and thus the land on which it stands will revert to me. Meanwhile, I shall build, with the good grey stone of our quarries, a library whose architecture will be in keeping with the village and the old church. I shall erect it facing High Street, and its grounds shall run down to the little rivulet, for I think the murmur of water is a pleasant sound to accompany the reading of a book. I shall then tear down and cart away your red-brick abomination. I'll pay back to Barnacle his three thousand pounds, with interest at ten per cent."

"All right," said Wilson, rising. "I cared nothing about the library from the beginning, except as a chance for making money. Meanwhile, here's another document to complete our transaction." And, with that, he handed Stranleigh his written resignation.

"Accepted," said Stranleigh, laughing. "When you go out through the front door, mind the step. Good night!"

Another complete episode in the eventful career of Lord Stranleigh, Philanthropist, will appear in the March Number.

MOTHER-LOVE.

By MRS. FRED REYNOLDS,

Author of "A Quaker Wooing," "St. David of the Dust," "The Man with the Wooden Face," etc.

THE two paced slowly up and down between the blue-green Cornish sea and the few scattered cottages known as the Cove. The group of blue-jerseyed fishermen, sunning themselves outside the net-house, marked the couple as they drew near, and, when they turned, followed their passage with dark-lashed grey eyes. "Strangers in the Cove" were always an object of interest, and these two more than most.

"Where're they to?" asked one sturdy idler of another leaning against the tarred door.

"To Jack George's. You know, John," replied the other, pressing down the tobacco in his short pipe.

"To thatched cottage," laconically supplied a third, shifting the balance of his body from his shoulders to another part of his anatomy, whereupon the rest of the men sighed, shuffled their feet, and fixed their eyes upon the ground.

The two strangers passed on, quite ignorant of the interest they had excited. Indeed, all the woman's thoughts were centred in the man, and all his, not perhaps without some reason, on himself.

She was small, slight, keen of face and eye, and her uncovered hair, which was wavy and plentiful, was brown thickly mixed with grey. Even then she looked full young to be the mother of the man at her side. His tall, strongly built figure was not so upright as it should have been; a slouch hat hid all his features but vividly red lips and a well-shaped chin. One hand was in the pocket of his white flannel trousers, the other rested on his mother's shoulder; hers met it and was clasped in his.

Her step was quick and firm; his dragged a little, and now and again he stumbled slightly as he went.

Hermon Fraser was blind.

"Tell me again, mother," he was saying; "I want to picture it all. No, let me quicken what faculties I have left. I will tell *you* all I can gather. The sea is on one side of us, the tide is low; I can smell the keen, strong scent of seaweed. The sea is calm, making only a faint ripple among the rocks—I think there are rocks?"

"Yes, close below us," she interposed; "but round the curve of the bay is sand—gleaming yellow sand. And the sea"—she looked fixedly at it—"Hermon, surely nothing in the whole world was ever so intensely blue, so liquidly green!"

"I know, I know," he answered hurriedly. Within he added: "It hurts—it hurts!" Then in a cheerful voice he went on—

"The road is white and dusty—I can feel that with my feet. Sea-birds are hovering and calling."

"Their pink feet sloping back, their heads turning this way and that; their shadows cross the white road quickly."

"On the other side of us are gardens. At least"—he faltered and slightly raised his head—"I believe I can smell mignonette."

"Yes, there are gardens—tiny plots enclosed in rough stone walls to give shelter from the wind and spray. Even then the leaves of the hydrangeas are brown and wilted, and the fuchsias bloom only on one side; the twigs to seaward are dried and bare. The mignonette, though sweet-scented, is ragged and thin. The nasturtiums are bright of bloom, but thick and short of stem; their leaves are small and few."

Hermon laughed, as it seemed, quite merrily.

"Mother mine, you are a born word-painter. I can see those nasturtiums, struggling against Fate and eaten up with caterpillars. Mother, why *did* you leave out the caterpillars?"

"Because I hate caterpillars," she answered brightly.

But the young man's mouth—all that could be seen of his face—was grave again.

She looked away across the sea—the exquisite Cornish sea that might never be

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anything but words to her son. The tears rose to her eyes. Their mutual misfortune was so new as yet that she had hardly realised that Hermon could no longer read her face—that there was no need to turn from him whilst she mastered her twitching muscles.

They walked a few paces in silence. Then she continued, as though there had been no break—

"Straight up behind the houses the cliff-side rises, with grey lichened rocks, cushions of heather, flower-dotted grass, and tufts of ferns. One could imagine a fragment of our north-country hills set down beside the Cornish sea."

"It must look fine against the deep blue southern sky." He answered manfully, though, in his heart, sounded as a knell the assurance that never again would he see the dear home mountains.

With an effort he went on.

"And the houses, mother—you must paint the houses, too."

"The houses are mostly of stone, cold and grey, and ugly and four-square; but one or two are low, whitewashed, with thatched roofs and small-paned windows. Then there are the boats, drawn up into the road, clustered together, black-hulled mostly, and taking gilded lights and blue reflections, casting sharp shadows on the white road. Some have bands of vivid blue and green."

"How paintable! I wish I had come here—before," said Hermon.

His mother ignored his remark as she continued hurriedly—

"One there is, painted a bright red all over—a small one, but it is crude. I don't think I like it."

"Not as it is now, beached and inert," he said, "but afloat, tossing and drifting—why, it would look like the fallen petal of a flower!"

She pressed the hand she held.

"Hermon, it is you, and not your old mammy, who is the word-painter. And you see, darling"—her voice trembled—"you are not cut off from that." Then, more eagerly: "I could be your secretary. I should just enjoy it."

"Or I could learn to work a typewriter," he amended. "I know"—he set his jaw and tried to order his words that they should not come out jerkily—"I know—blind—people—do. Oh, yes, there are plenty of things left!"

Plenty left! The brave boy! Was there ever courage to equal his? So the mother-heart asked itself. And all the while that heart was aching for him. For she knew—none better—how closely linked to all his being was his chosen career.

"My father's pictures are beautiful," he said once, "but he died before he had made his name. I must make it for him."

The words fell on the mother's ears as no empty boast, but with all the solemnity of a vow. And Hermon had begun so well, made such progress, success seemed already within his reach. Then had come his blindness.

Insidiously at first—a dimness of vision, a talk of overwork, a time of sinking at heart, persistent disbelief in the dread symptoms—then, swift and sudden, blank darkness.

Even then neither of them would admit the inevitable to be possible. There were weary journeyings from one specialist to another, reckless expenditure of small and now doubly precious means, and ever renewed hopelessness. At last a consultant, young enough still to have faith in miracles, gave a thread of hope. There was a certain operation—he did not hide the fact that it was of a hazardous nature—still, there was the operation, and, if successful, it did give a chance. First, however, there must be a systematic building-up of bodily strength.

Acting on the specialist's advice, mother and son came down to Cornwall. At times they talked brightly to one another, as though hope were a thing assured; at others they made an attempt to realise the future at its worst and brace themselves to meet it.

"At last," so Hermon broke into his mother's thoughts, "at any rate, my good Uncle Arthur will no longer plague me with his offers of partnership. I am afraid even he, in spite of the huge fortune he is supposed to have amassed out of derelicts, would find no use for such a wrecks as I. I am never very clear as to what a ship-breaker does or is, but I feel sure, under the present circumstances, my worthy uncle will acquiesce in what he used to call my 'blindness' to my own interests."

His words were reckless as was his tone, but his mother read, and read rightly, the pain underlying.

"Your uncle's answer to my letter—about——"

"My blindness," he filled in. His voice was a trifle harsh.

"His letter was quite kind," she went on gently. "He even offered help——"

"As though we needed *his* help!" the young man said proudly.

"Of course not," she returned hurriedly,



"The two paced slowly up and down."

not daring to face past expenses, nor the enormous fees that were waiting in the future—fees connected with that which, with a sick heart, she felt would only be a fresh source of disappointment, besides—how her mother-flesh shrank!—bringing fresh suffering to both. But Hermon was so brave, so unselfish. It was for her sake, she knew, he had consented to undergo this further trial. And he had already suffered so much and so uncomplainingly! But she must not think of that; she must be cheerful for his sake.

Quiet, rest, fresh air, and cheerful companionship—these the doctor had ordered. Hermon, unused as yet to his affliction, shunned all company but hers. It more behoved her, therefore, to be cheerful for his sake.

He was cheerful, too—outwardly, at all events, whilst inwardly he was upheld by satisfaction in his own heroism. How brave, how praiseworthy! So he patted self comfortably on the back. Even his mother, he thought, could not gauge the anguish the abandonment of his cherished career had caused him. Already with the thought the anguish had abated somewhat, for his vanity swelled with his own enforced courage, which he honestly looked upon as entirely assumed for his mother's sake. He acknowledged that it was hard for her—she had always been ambitious for him. A blind person would be an awful burden to any but a mother; mothers, he supposed, just revelled in anyone's helplessness. So long as he "kept up his end" and "smothered the blue devils" in his heart, she would not have much to complain about.

Thus the strain of cheerfulness, though he never could have realised it, nor, indeed, would she, was lighter for Hermon than for his mother. Yet she never failed him.

Day by day they walked and talked, and the young man's frame braced itself with new strength, his step was more assured, a healthy colour crept into his face. And all the while there was never a change of sky or sea, never an incident of the simple village life, but was painted vividly for the son by the mother—the rose of sunset transmitted through breaking spray, mauve-tinted shadowy foam, green crystal glitter in the crests of sunlit waves, dying bracken and gold-splashed lichen burning through early morning mist, blue rock pools edged with seaweed, umber, russet, and purple shimmering lights—a hundred changing effects.

Long afterwards, Hermon would relate as an eye-witness, in perfect honesty, the story of a mighty "take" of pilchards — the hurried manning of the boats, the shooting of the seine, dancing reflections of the boats and the yellow oilskins worn by the men, hovering rainbows in the mass of leaping fish drawn to the surface by the "tuck-net," swooping of clamorous birds that took a hasty toll of fish, and everywhere, on men and boats, and drifting through the shimmering sea, shining silver scales.

Mother and son would stop at times and talk with the men. At first she talked, and Hermon dropped into silence, leaning on his stick. Like an open wound shrinking from a touch, his mind dreaded chance allusion to his blindness. He need not have feared. These rough-seeming men, delicate of perception as children, never by word or look encroached upon his sore—not so much as by saying: "See you here," or "Look you there."

After a time he grew easy in their company, and would laugh and joke with them. And she was more than content to lapse into silence.

Then came a day—followed by many weary days—when the mother walked alone. For now her son had no need of her—was better, so it had been decreed, without the excitement of her nearness.

It was by his wish she stayed on in the Cove.

"It would make it harder for me," he assured her, "were I to know you near, and not be allowed to see"—he bit his lip—"I mean, to have you with me. Stay here and send me news about the chaps and the pilchards, and all the jolly bits of colour. Plenty of colour, mind—I shall like that!"

Inwardly he judged it would be easier to suffer and face the worst—if it came to the worst—amongst strangers.

So he went, buoyed up by the necessity of a display of courage, and, still more, by the important part he played.

And she stayed, and hung in sick suspense from one day's post to another's, and longed for, yet dreaded, the appearance of the slack-limbed youth who supplied the scanty telegraph service from "up to" to "down along."

Day by day news, meagre in its brevity, filtered down to the waiting heart. The operation was fixed for a certain hour, unexpectedly postponed, fixed again. She deserted the white road and wandered far along the sandy shore, with parched mouth and dry eyes. She must be alone, quite alone, with this agony of suspense,

Suddenly she turned and hurried back. The fatal hour was already past; news might come at any moment—news that to her sick heart seemed ominously long in coming.

It came at last, but not till she had reached a depth of misery that touched numb indifference.

The operation was over. No definite result could be ascertained for twelve days.

Then a slow period dragged past, with scarcely varying bulletins—"Temperature normal," "Strength maintained."

The vital question was still unanswered, yet it was a great deal to know that at least her boy's precious life was spared. At heart now she hardly hoped for the restoration of his sight; she had grown physically weak in her lonely suspense. Her hair, that had been brown and bright before Hermon's affliction, was now snow-white. She was wasted, too, with profitless watching during long days and sleepless nights, fancying her boy was needing her, was uncared for, even—a thousand mother's fears.

At last came a letter. Her heart beat quickly. Though the address was in an unfamiliar hand—a woman's—something told her the letter itself was from Hermon.

She caught her breath as she opened it. The writing, straggling and uneven, blurred before her eyes. With an effort she read.

"Mother Mine,—It is all rot saying it will harm me, and, anyhow, I don't care—I must be the first to tell you the news. I never really hoped; I thought you did, and I pretended. Mother, I know all about it now. First of all, the bandages were taken off this morning.

"I can see! They won't let me use my eyes yet, though, for a little bit, so I am writing this in the dark, and Nurse is guiding my fingers, like a kid!

"She made me stop there—said I was excited. I wasn't; but I have to give in to her, because—well, it is all through her nursing—she says 'No,' but, anyhow, this is my letter, and I say 'Yes'—it is through her I have got back my sight.

"Mother, I shall see you again, and I shall see *her!* For, of course, you will have guessed by now. In spite of all the pain and bother, I am having the time of my life. Nurse—I still call her so, though her name is Mary Anson. Such a jolly name, but Mary Fraser is better still. Now you know everything.

"I am writing to Uncle Arthur—at least, Nurse will do it at my dictation. She really seems to enjoy being my secretary.

"Yes, I am writing to uncle, telling him all about it. Of course I shall accept his offer now. Ship-breaking always appealed to me, somehow. There is no living for a married man in Art.

"We are longing to see you.

"Yours (and Mary's),

"HERMON."

For a long while she stood gazing at the letter. The news it contained was so unexpected, so overwhelming, that almost she had lost her personality, her very hold on herself. Since her early widowhood she had been "Hermon's mother." Those words had summed up her meaning and purpose in life. He had been everything to her; she had been first with him.

And now!

Her mind felt dull and lifeless.

Her boy could see—she was trying to grasp this stupendous fact—Hermon would not be blind, dependent on her any longer. Her hand went up to her head. Would he mind about her hair? She had not told him that it was grey lest he should grieve. And now it was white!

Then she gave a little sigh. It would not matter to Hermon now. What colour was Mary's? Was she pretty? Hermon had always been so fastidious about appearances, and he could have hardly seen——

She broke off with a laugh that was half a sob. What a romance the whole thing was! And she—she was ready to love Mary for Hermon's sake.

And now the mist had cleared from her eyes. Life had come back to her. She saw once more the trembling jewel of the sea, and the sky, wide, spacious, eternally unmoved. Her heart gave a bound of happiness.

Hermon would see it all!

Tears rushed to her eyes as she pressed the letter to her lips.

Hermon would be happy!

The thing she had prayed for, lived for, ever since her young husband had left her, was accomplished.

Hermon would not need her now.

With bright eyes and a joyous smile, she went along the little dusty road to share the good news with her kindly-hearted friends.

As she went, the gulls wheeled about her, their heads turning this way and that; their shadows crossed and recrossed the white road at her feet. The pungent odour of seaweed rose to her nostrils, and with it the sweetness of the mignonette, like the fragrance of self-surrender rising from a life of storms.

THE GARDEN OF GIRELLES.

By NORMAN INNES,

Author of "Parson Croft," "My Lady's Kiss," "The Lonely Guard," etc.

"MONSIEUR forgets himself!"

The speaker stiffened in the old-fashioned, high-backed chair and glanced sternly at his *vis-à-vis*, who, with glass filled to the brim, was in the act of rising. The latter, a grizzled veteran of close on three-score, dashed his fist upon the table.

"I forget nothing—nothing! They were swept away, obliterated, according to their deserts. Once and for ever France has rejected your Bourbons. I drink——"

"Monsieur le Colonel, I entreat you!" protested the landlord from the doorway. "Consider the reputation of my inn. Such language is indiscreet, some might say treasonable. You are not alone——"

"What is that to me?" cried the other, his dark eyes ablaze, his gaunt figure trembling with passion. "Not a man in Clermont mistakes my opinions. I am not ashamed of them. Chut, man! I have known you Royalist, Republican, Bonapartist, and Royalist again!"

Cowed by his guest's outburst, the landlord spread his hands in despair.

"One of my trade must live," he stammered, with an anxious sidelong glance in my direction. "Monsieur le Colonel, who has served France with honour, may say much as he pleases, but, none the less, speech so unguarded can do no good to me or to 'La Couronne,' as the Count des Vernets knows."

He turned to the upright figure seated with his back to the window, whose grey eyes were fixed upon the fiery man of war.

"Enough, Picaud," said he. "The Colonel means nothing, you may take my word for it—nothing."

"Nothing?" The swart, beetle-browed soldier set down his glass upon the table, and the wine lapped over the brim. "Heaven and earth, Monsieur le Comte, you shall answer for this, unless, of course——"

His speech seemed choking him, and he seated himself abruptly, with a scowl for me, at the distant end of the long, whitewashed *salon*.

"My sword, monsieur, is at your service now as ever," rejoined his companion gravely, "but I would ask you to reflect, to consider. Surely a scene such as this is as unworthy of one who has served France as of the day we are met to celebrate."

Whereupon the other's heat died away in a moment, its last flicker expended upon the landlord, who was waved from the room without ceremony.

"You are right—right as I am ever wrong," he answered, as the door swung to. "Here, take the bottle and fill. We know a better toast, old friend—a toast that comes before my emperor or your king. To the blue eyes——"

He was upon his feet in a moment, his rugged face alight, but checked himself suddenly, as if for the first time aware of my presence. The other bowed. He, too, had risen, and then these elderly gentlemen, fronting each other, silent and erect, upon either side of the oval table, raised their glasses, drained them, and shook hands. For some seconds they stood thus, their clasp unbroken; then, with a nod and smile for the other, each takes down his hat from the pegs upon the wall, and he of the grey eyes and clear-cut features settles a blue quasi-military cloak upon his friend's shoulders, and with a bow to me, which I had scarce the wit or grace to return, follows the soldier from the room.

It was a strange scene that I had witnessed, and one of which I could make but little. When first I had entered the public room of "La Couronne," I had been attracted by the two men seated at *déjeuner* in the recess of the deep bow-window overlooking the "place." Each was past the prime of life; each, so I judged, had a varied acquaintance with men and countries; each boasted that courtly, old-world manner once distinctive

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of the gentleman of France. They made a striking pair, these grizzled veterans, with their strong, proud features and gallant bearing. The one was grey-eyed, and his grave, impassive face told of a cooler nature than that of his friend of the swarthy skin and hawk-like nose, who for temper might have been a Gascon. I watched them as they crossed the sunlit square, and though they had long disappeared, I was still standing at the window when the landlord re-entered the room.

"Monsieur, I trust, is not offended?"

I stared at the man.

"At the Colonel's outbreak."

I laughed.

"Not in the least," I rejoined, understanding the other's misgivings. Many a thriving inn had been closed by the police for no more than the drinking of the old Emperor's health by some hot-headed, wine-inflamed Bonapartist. "Such guests as those do you credit."

"Ah, monsieur is good. The Colonel, for all his hasty temper, is an honoured patron of 'La Couronne.' But they are a strange pair, this fiery officer of dragoons and Monsieur le Comte, a Royalist to the very marrow of him."

"But they are friends?"

"There are no better in France, though they differ in all but creed. Yet, believe me, it was not always so, as I've heard.

"Each," continued Picaud, "was born in the neighbourhood. Save for the decade following 'The Terror,' there has been a Des Vernets at La Forte since the days of Saint Louis, and the Colonel's father was old Maître Prevel, the Clermont attorney. There was no better-looking man in the province than the young *seigneur*, and none bolder, unless it were Victor Prevel, the lawyer's son. Pretty tales were told of the pair, and there was little love lost between them, I can tell you. Then come the evil days, and the Count has to cross the frontier with his sire, and for fifteen years La Forte stands empty and ruinous. Meanwhile young Prevel had joined the army, and, until five years since, France saw as little of him as of his rival. Now comes the miracle. Since their return to Clermont the two old enemies have been inseparable. They must have met abroad and patched up their former differences, but the change has made food for gossip among us old folks of the district who can remember the ill-blood between the pair. They have now gone up the valley to La Forte or perhaps to Girelles."

"To Girelles—the château of the De Cissacs?" cried I, my interest suddenly awakened.

"Monsieur knows the ladies?"

I shook my head. The junior partner in a firm of Paris lawyers, I had made the journey to Clermont with the object of satisfying myself as to the identity of a certain Mademoiselle de Cissac, who was known to have been living in the neighbourhood subsequent to the fall of the Directory.

"No?" rejoined Picaud, rather oddly as I thought. "Then monsieur may know Mademoiselle Jeanne and her niece by repute?"

I had again to confess my ignorance. A week since I had never even heard the ladies' name, and, what is more, until that morning I had never set foot in Clermont. With but a day's notice, my partner, old Jacques Levellier, had despatched me to the south for the purpose of gaining an interview with Mademoiselle Jeanne de Cissac. We were acting on behalf of one of our oldest clients, an *emigré* newly returned after years of exile, who, previous to the fall of the monarchy, had been a friend of my uncle, Antoine Mesnard, the founder of the firm of Mesnard and Levellier. To the best of my recollection I had never seen my relative, but it was for the sake of the taciturn old lawyer—who, ere perishing in the early days of "The Terror," had given him a share in his business—that Levellier had sought me out, entered me to the law, and finally had made me his partner in the firm. A journey of nearly two hundred miles in the heat of June possesses few attractions, but our client was insistent, and I had all but forgotten the discomforts of the diligence as the landlord of "La Couronne" volunteered the minutest details as to the path I should follow up the valley to Girelles.

Within two hours, thanks to his directions, I was standing in the hall of the château, a dim, stone-flagged chamber, sparsely furnished in a style anterior to that of the Great Louis. All was comfortless, almost cheerless, save that on a massive oak table was set a bowl of crimson roses which filled the place with their fragrance. Here I waited, and the servant in faded livery to whom I had given a letter of introduction from the local *avocat*, with a somewhat curt demand that I might see the mistress of the château, had been gone nearly a quarter of an hour ere I caught a footfall upon the stairs at my back, and turned hurriedly.

"Monsieur Mesnard?"

I bowed, perhaps with an effort, to a

woman—a girl, rather—whose deep blue eyes met mine in a glance of keen inquiry.

"You are Mademoiselle——"

I hesitated. She was certainly not the Mademoiselle de Cissac I was in quest of, if the scanty particulars I had regarding that lady were correct.

"Claire de Cissac," said she. "And your business, sir?"

I had held myself a man of affairs, but was conscious that my professional calm was deserting me.

"Pardon me," I stammered, "but the lady I wished to see must be many years older than mademoiselle. I fancy it is mademoiselle's aunt whom I seek."

"My aunt?" said she coldly and in evident surprise. "I must ask monsieur to be more explicit."

She looked me up and down, as though I were no better than a village urchin caught robbing the castle orchards and brought before her for judgment.

"I am a partner in the firm of Mesnard and Levellier, attorneys, of Paris, as the letter of introduction from Maître Tissot, of Clermont, will witness, and am instructed by a client to ascertain whether Mademoiselle Jeanne de Cissac is still living."

"My aunt is an invalid, monsieur," replied the lady, for the first time relaxing something of her icy manner. "It is altogether impossible for you to see her. Any message——"

"But, mademoiselle," I protested, "I am here for the express purpose of seeing your relative. Though what I ask is no more than a formality, it is imperative that——"

"And why, sir?" she demanded uncompromisingly. She gave a little toss to her head, and a ray of sunlight from a narrow window set high above the panelling caught her hair and turned it to gold.

"To satisfy myself with my own eyes that your relative is living—a mere formality, but a necessity none the less."

I was nettled; the position bordered upon the ludicrous. I had made the long journey—a matter of fifty hours' travel—to assure myself that Mademoiselle de Cissac was alive, and was now refused all sight of the lady by a girl not half her age.

"I do not doubt your good faith, Monsieur Mesnard, but my aunt can see no one this afternoon; to-morrow possibly, but to-day certainly not."

"But, mademoiselle, I must set out for Paris this very evening; there is business of importance——"

"It is impossible, I repeat," said the other, with a little curtsy, bewitching in its defiance; and then the blue eyes took on a softer light as she added: "But let me offer monsieur some refreshment."

I was in no mood for refreshment, however, and the set of my features could not have been lost upon the girl.

"I am sorry," said she—chagrined though I was, I will own that the sudden solicitude of her manner made some amends for her former uncompromising attitude—"but it cannot be to-day; to-morrow, perhaps. Even I, believe me, would not dare to disturb Aunt Jeanne this afternoon. You will take some refreshment, though?"

She spoke so gravely, yet in a voice so full of contrition, that none but a churl could have refused her offer. Under other circumstances I would have made shift, and gladly, with the niece's company, without a thought for the aunt.

"I am sorry, too," I answered. Though worsted, I did my best to take my defeat in good part, more than satisfied that the girl did not refuse me without some good reason.

The flush on her cheek deepened, and that little curtsy was repeated.

"Thank you." There was a world of gratitude in her eyes as they rested on mine. "Ah, how I wish I could explain myself! But perhaps monsieur can guess. To-day is the anniversary of my dear aunt's wedding-day."

My brows may have lifted.

"Of her wedding-day?" I gasped in bewilderment.

It was but half a smile that flickered for a moment on the oval face of the girl as she answered.

"Of the day on which she was to have been married, rather," said she. "You understand me now, perhaps?"

I bowed without a word, though as puzzled as ever, and she added, with a brightening of her features: "You must excuse me; I will return with the wine in a moment."

Alone in that gloomy hall, with its sombre, time-worn furniture, I will own that my feelings were mixed. It was disappointing to be forbidden an interview with the lady, but I had succeeded beyond my expectations. My partner had entertained but the smallest hopes of even tracing the woman for whom our client had inquired. A quarter of a century had wrought strange changes in France, had worked wide havoc among families such as those of De Cissac, and I had looked to find Girelles a dismantled ruin, to learn that no more was known of its former occupants



"'I do not doubt your good faith, Monsieur Mesnard.'"

than that they had found a home in Prussia, Austria, or England.

In fact, I was congratulating myself on the results of my journey, when the sound of approaching footsteps recalled the lilac gown and gracious personality of the girl, who, if refusing my request, had done me the honour of taking me in some measure into her confidence. I turned expectantly to the curtained doorway through which she had disappeared. My heart, I fancy, had quickened. Though a man of affairs, I was but seven-and-twenty, an age at which even the dust of a court of law cannot obscure the charms of smiling lips and deep blue eyes. My heart stood still as the curtains were drawn aside.

A woman was standing in the entrance, but not her whose return I had looked for, yet none the less she made a striking figure. In years she could not have been less than fifty, but age, instead of dimming, had added a charm to a beauty which in its youth must have been unmatched. Delicately moulded features, a complexion clear, if pale and somewhat lined, a pair of eyes of lightest blue, crowned by snow-white hair, made a picture not easily forgotten, and one which, in conjunction with the strangeness of her attire, will live in my memory till my dying day. Her gown of white satin was after some long-dead fashion, but fresh and unfaded as if new from the *couturière's* hands; a point-lace shawl wrapped her neck and shoulders. At the sight of me she had paused, with a look half wondering, half expectant, but wholly charming, and the next moment she swept me a curtsy, and a sudden light shone in her steely eyes.

"Ah, a guest!" said she. "Monsieur must forgive me, but my memory is none of the best."

"I am Monsieur Mesnard, from Paris," I stammered in confusion.

She looked at me, an anxious, puzzled expression crossing her face ere she answered—

"Monsieur Antoine Mesnard, my father's attorney, to be sure, to see that all is in order."

I was dumb—at a loss to find words to tell her that I was Jean, not Antoine, Mesnard, the dead uncle I had never seen and of whom I knew so little, whose papers and effects had been seized by the Committee of Public Safety in the early days of "The Terror," and as I stood speechless, the rustle of skirts behind me told that Mademoiselle Claire had returned.

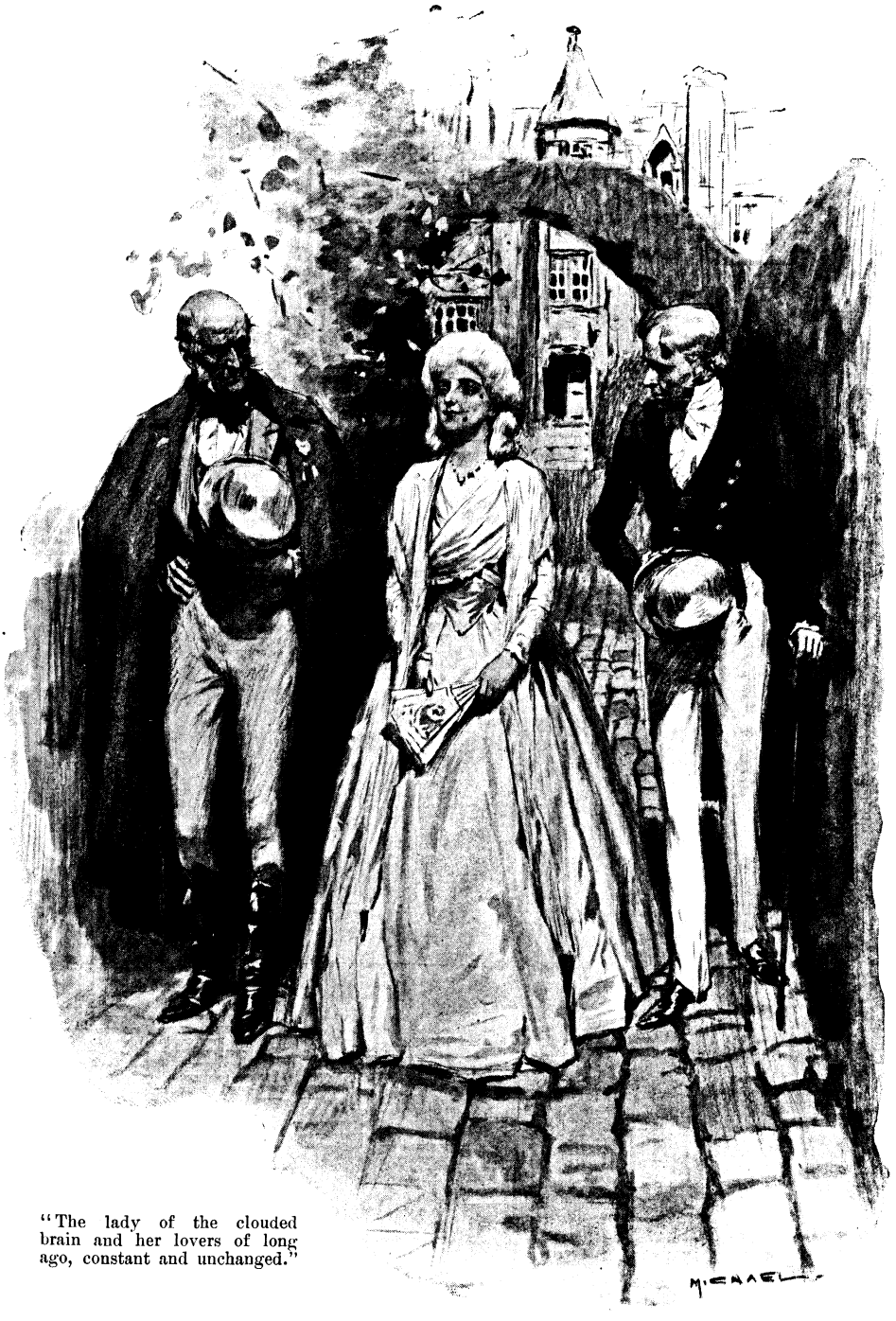
"Ah, little one," said the white-haired lady, at the sight of the other, who was carrying a tray on which was a flagon of wine, a *pâté*, and some fruit, "here is Monsieur—Monsieur—*hélas!* what a memory for names I have!—our lawyer from Paris. Monsieur, I have the honour to present you to my sister, Mademoiselle de Cissac."

I would have given a hundred livres to have been as many leagues from Girelles as the girl dropped me a curtsy. I bowed like some automaton, I fear, striving to grasp the position of affairs, to guess at the mystery shadowing the lives of these women. One point seemed clear enough as I dimly realised the pathos of the situation. Like Claire de Cissac, I was doomed to act a part, and that part I was set on playing to the utmost of my power, be the *dénouement* what it might, for the sake of that white-haired lady for whom the past appeared the present, for the sake of her loyal-hearted kinswoman.

"Let us wait the arrival of the others in the garden, *ma petite*. Monsieur, I will lead the way."

As the speaker turned, I looked guiltily at her niece for guidance. The blue eyes were liquid, but there lurked no suspicion of reproach in their depths. Instead, she gave me a smile of encouragement—a smile so brave and yet so piteous that for a moment a tightness gripped my throat, for a moment the dull oak wainscoting in the corridor down which we passed grew blurred and indistinct. Then we stepped forth upon a moss-grown terrace overlooking a lawn velvet smooth and flanked by broad box hedges. A belt of larches fringed the gorge beyond, upon the further side of which the bare brown hills were shimmering in the afternoon sunlight.

The next fifteen minutes I look back on as a fantastic dream—as a nightmare, I might have said—but that they were hallowed with memories of dead years, fragrant with a breath of bygone France. How I answered Mademoiselle de Cissac I know not; her inquiries as to folk I had never seen, her allusions to events of which I had never even heard, kept me in a fever of embarrassment. I blundered at every turn; how any single answer of mine satisfied her is beyond me, but, prompted by the anxious glances of the deep blue eyes, which scarcely left mine for a moment, I lived through the ordeal. At last, when Mademoiselle de Cissac touched upon the matter of some property in Normandy, which she averred had but recently been settled upon her, mentioning as her



"The lady of the clouded brain and her lovers of long ago, constant and unchanged."

trustee the name of a Comte d'Herens, the client on whose instructions I had come to Clermont, I found myself on surer ground. There was no use in explaining to the stricken lady the object of my journey; all that I had sought was attained now that I had actually seen Mademoiselle de Cissac. None the less, I was listening attentively in the hope that I might gain some information which might prove useful to our client—who,

I felt sure, meditated some action in the matter of this trust, now five-and-twenty years in existence—when the lady paused abruptly. Her pale blue eyes had suddenly lost the wistful, expectant look that had struck me when first I had met her, her cheeks had flushed till they all but matched the colour of her niece's, and a smile was breaking on her lips as she rose from the grey stone seat.

Slow as I was to follow her glance, I saw in a moment that I was clean forgotten, and then, catching sight of two figures emerging from an alley in the box hedge at the far end of the garden, I stared in amazement.

"Come, monsieur, come," whispered Mademoiselle Claire, her hand upon my sleeve. But still I stood as if beneath some spell, held by the sight of those two who were approaching the steps which led down to the lawn—the Comte des Vernets and his friend, the fiery colonel of dragoons. Then the clutch on my sleeve tightened.

"Monsieur Mesnard, we must go," the girl insisted, and side by side we stole away along the terrace; nor was it till a thick wall of box hid us from the garden that my companion paused and looked keenly in my face.

"Perhaps monsieur understands?" said she very simply.

I nodded; try as I would I could not have found words in which to answer her.

"Years since it happened, before I was born; it was my mother who told me the story. My aunt, once the fairest in the province, was loved by those two, Henri des Vernets and Victor Prevel. Each would have made her his wife, and so well did she love them in return that she could never find it in her heart to make the choice between the pair, till in the end my grandsire accepted the young Count des Vernets for her suitor.

"Of all that followed upon old Louis des Cissac's choice I know but the barest details, but it fell out that on the eve of my aunt's marriage the men quarrelled. They met upon the morning of her wedding-day, each wounded the other—mortally, as it was at first supposed—and it was in the garden yonder that they told the bride the tidings, for there was no hiding the matter.

"Five-and-twenty years have passed since then, yet my kinswoman is unwed, and that though still the mistress of two hearts which in all France are the truest and staunchest, for, contrary to expectation, the men lived to learn that the woman for whose sake they had so rashly risked their lives would never fully recover from the effects of the shock. For her, time has stood still; she sees no change in the world about her; I am her sister Claire, my mother, our servants those she knew in her youth, and you, an utter stranger, thanks to your name, are Antoine Mesnard, my grandsire's friend."

"And the others—the Count and his friend, the Colonel?"

In a moment her face cleared.

"Your own eyes shall answer the question," said she softly, and with a hand upon my arm, she drew me to the angle of the hedge, round which we peeped.

There in the sunlight, oblivious of our presence, the three were walking—the lady of the clouded brain and her lovers of long ago, constant and unchanged. To and fro along the stone-flagged path they passed, the woman in her wedding-gown, a girl in face, in figure, in all save her snow-white hair, while on each side, earnest, devoted, *épris* still, paced a grey-headed man of the world.

With a mist before my eyes, I drew back, ashamed to play the spy upon that incomparable trio. I looked at Claire, and she smiled, though her cheeks were wet with tears.

"Monsieur understands now?"

I bowed my head.

"And will return to-morrow?"

"There is no longer any need," I answered, and glanced in the deep blue eyes. For the first time that afternoon they fell before my gaze.

"As monsieur pleases," came the girl's reply, and I fancied a sigh went with it—a sigh which was music to my heart.

"Then till to-morrow," I whispered softly, as I bent above her hand in the shadow of the broad box hedge in the Garden of Girelles.



Turning to address his friend on the extreme left, a sportsman has unwittingly and dangerously swung his gun round, pointing towards the lady. The more experienced would instinctively keep their guns pointing sufficiently forward to be safe under all circumstances.

FIREARM ACCIDENTS

HOW TO AVOID THEM.

By HAYDN BROWN.

Photographs by Charles J. L. Clarke.

THE list of firearm accidents is a very large one each year, whether fatal or merely damaging to certain parts of the body and curable, and it is noteworthy that many of them result from either ignorance or from simple thoughtlessness on the part of those who may have some small amount of experience, but not extensive enough acquaintance to produce instinctive or automatic safe handling. Amongst those brought up to the proper use of firearms from boyhood accidents are extremely rare, because constant correct usage has created a habit which scarcely anything can alter, although it is possible, as I shall show, for accidents to occur even when very highly experienced sportsmen only are concerned, just as it is possible for railway accidents to occur, even though travelling on the railway is proved by statistics to be safer than walking.

Firearm accidents might, however, be reduced to an insignificant minimum if certain simple rules for handling, which should apply to all firearms, were studied: and though this task were better accomplished at an early age, when all good habits should be acquired, it may not be too late for those older persons who may be sportingly inclined to endeavour to make their pleasure as safe as possible to themselves and others.

Between September 5 and 10 inclusive of last year, for the purpose of studying the circumstances that had led up to them, I received reports of no fewer than thirteen serious firearm accidents which had occurred within the six days. Out of the thirteen, six were caused by shot-guns, three being fatal; six were caused by revolvers or pistols, four being fatal; one was caused by a toy-pistol—not fatal.

Of the gun accidents, one was caused by a sportsman falling when his gun was full-cock. A second occurred through a gun being taken up from a table, when it "went off," nobody knowing why or how. A third happened while the gun was being cleaned, the owner not knowing that it was loaded. A fourth resulted from a loaded gun being conveyed on a corn-reaping machine, from which it fell off and discharged, killing the driver. A fifth resulted from a sportsman passing through a hedge with gun held improperly. The sixth followed careless walking through bushes.

Of the revolver cases, in one instance a boy took up a revolver, not knowing it to have been loaded in *one chamber* only; he aimed it at another boy and fired, killing him instantly. A second fatality occurred while a revolver was being examined by two men. A third injury happened after taking



The boy in the bushes sees danger down a gun-barrel, and calls out. All guns are held improperly—one at the trail, another with hand over muzzle, and a third pointed towards others while being examined for defective action.

up a revolver that had been supposed to be unloaded. A fourth resulted through a revolver being examined after it had miss-fired three times. Two further fatal cases occurred while revolvers were merely being examined.

Thus, particular observation and analysis of cases occurring in a few days during the sporting season elicited the surprising fact that, of all firearms, revolvers probably cause the largest number of accidents, taking the year round, and there would appear to be three main reasons why these weapons should be so dangerous. Firstly, they are very small, and usually treated as insignificant, being placed in a pocket or in any corner of cupboard or drawer, for anyone to take up out of curiosity. Secondly, the type of make varies greatly. In the case of a gun or rifle, the form of the weapon is comparatively uniform in size, and even to a great extent in mechanism. Of guns there are roughly only two forms to-day—the hammer and the hammerless. Of revolvers, hardly two people can be found, in a day's search, to possess the same make. Hence mere examination and experimentation with revolvers, which are not at first sight quite understood, leads to many accidents. A third feature serves to make revolvers the more dangerous, and this is the relative shortness of their barrel. A gun is long enough to give suggestion of direction and danger; a revolver will turn in the hollow of the hand, before a second or third person in the party may have recognised the dangerous handling of it. I have seen even one accustomed to handling a revolver correctly hold it in a



All previous improper positions of guns are corrected in this illustration. The lady is now examining her gun with its muzzle held away from others. A second gun is carried over the forearm with muzzle pointing downwards; a third is carried over the shoulder with muzzle pointing upwards.



Hearing something moving behind, the thoughtless sportsman has turned round, having pointed his gun horizontally towards his friend, instead of vertically. Note the correct handling of his gun by the other man, in walking cover. Some authorities are of opinion—in their writings and illustrations—that the muzzle should be held pointing upwards in walking; but experience indicates that the above is the best method, in which the gun is dropped as low as convenient in both arms, for this position entails the least strain when long distances are to be walked over.

very dangerous manner for perhaps a moment when the attention had been specially diverted.

The following rules might well be copied out and kept in a pocket-book for reference on the approach of each shooting season; or they might be pasted within the lid of a gun-case. Enterprising gunsmiths, who derive little benefit from the annual reduction in number of sportsmen through accident, might deal out a printed list of rules with every thousand cartridges they sell. Again, still better, I would deferentially suggest to the Inland Revenue authorities the good that might be done by their printing a set of rules and recommendations, such as those following, on the back of all gun licenses issued annually. Sergeant-instructors are supposed to teach recruits how to handle a rifle properly, but the latter would be none the worse for reading a set of rules that applied to firearms generally.

Even in the case of special-actioned hammerless or so-called safety guns, the correct gun habit, as respects carrying and regard for the position of the muzzle at all times, should, of course, be acquired, for a sportsman accustomed to one form of gun may have occasion to use another in an emergency. Apart from this reason, a uniformity of habit tends to inculcate regular method in the minds of all concerned, irrespective of actual exceptional necessity which might be suggested by any particular make of gun. Uniformity of habit also



After being expostulated, the sportsman, only too willing to learn to do the right thing, on the next occasion when a hare gets up behind, sweeps the muzzle of his gun from front to rear vertically and safely.

begets confidence and comfort for all concerned. However safe a particular make of gun may be considered, it should be handled with exactly the same care as an old flintlock, if only to satisfy those present who may not be certain of its patent safety. Instances have come to my notice of so-called safety guns being discharged—apparently discharging themselves, for all one could elicit otherwise—neither the holder nor anyone observing him being able to explain why they had done so.

RULES TO BE STUDIED BY THOSE HANDLING FIREARMS (RIFLES, GUNS, OR REVOLVERS).

NOTE.—*Each rule ends at the first full-stop after the number. The remainder of each paragraph is explanatory.*

1. Always store firearms, when not going to be used, in a definite place recognised by all. They should not be left just anywhere, in any corner of hall, or study, or in this or that drawer at various times.



Photo by] [*Bunce Bros., Caterham.*

It is dangerous to poke amongst the bushes with a loaded gun, looking for a dead bird or rabbit.

2. Always place a gun, rifle, or revolver where it will not fall. If in the field of sport, place it upright, if possible, where others are not likely to stumble over it, whether people, horses, or dogs.

3. Always investigate your safety or half-cock action at least once a season. Gun-locks wear, and may discharge when not intended.

4. Never lay a gun flat upon the ground anywhere without first taking the cartridges out, for the bolt of a rabbit or excitement of a dog may cause it to be trodden upon and discharged. While sportsmen are resting or lunching on the absolutely flat ground, where there are no trees or underwood, guns had better be laid down near one another in an open, obvious position, not in long grass. It is true that hosts or head-keepers may habitually keep an eye upon the habits of their guests, and recommend accordingly, but this is bad training for careless guests who ought themselves to know what to do.

5. Always suspect a firearm to be loaded until known to be unloaded. Sometimes it is not safe to take the word of a friend, who himself may be mistaken. The fact that a revolver is loaded in, perhaps, only one barrel may not be appreciated after five barrels have been looked at. When it changes hands, after being curiously examined, someone may try the fit of a cartridge and leave it there.

6. Always turn the barrels away from people when either loading or half-cocking.

7. A miss-fire should always render any weapon worthy of increased caution, for various reasons. Combustion may merely linger through defect of powder, the weapon discharging when least expected to do so. Miss-fire may also be caused by defect of mechanism, which may make a weapon dangerous all the time. Miss-firing revolvers are especially dangerous.

8. A weapon out of order should not be used. Triggers which have worn "light" should be repaired. A gun which has fallen and received a dent should be discarded for repair—it might burst.

9. A glove should never be worn on the trigger hand. A mitten with thumb-holes is allowable. Gloves cause slipping, which is highly dangerous.

10. If a member of a party be found to be ignorant, indifferent, or careless, he should be singled out for reproof without hesitation. He should be politely but firmly asked to adopt customary and safe habits, or retire from the party. No such danger should be allowed to continue. A wise host will decline to proceed another yard until he is amply reassured by a defaulting member of his party. Some hosts issue invitations to shoot without knowing the sporting capacity of, perhaps, a youth who has declared himself to be a "fine shot," but who had never killed more than a sitting rabbit with an air-gun. On the other hand, an instance is recollected of an accident occurring through the ignorance

of a host who had taken a shooting for the first time in his life, and who had to learn how to handle a gun really properly from his first guests. One of the guests happened to be inexperienced, moreover.



Photo by] *[Bunce Bros., Caterham.*

Getting over an awkward fence with loaded gun held in dangerous position. The slightest slip may cause the gun to discharge.

11. The young sportsman should develop a "gun habit" for life, of never pointing even an unloaded firearm towards anybody or anything living, at any time, not even in fun. Some users may think for the moment that they have unloaded their gun, when possibly they have for some reason failed to do so. Pointing even an unloaded firearm deliberately towards anyone should always be deemed a highly offensive action, and open to no excuse whatever. Many accidents occur through actually aiming a loaded weapon "in fun," or for the mere sake of creating alarm. Some people are absent-minded, or maybe clumsy, suffering from cold hands. Numbed fingers will sometimes act spasmodically and press a trigger without a person either intending or knowing it. Wet fingers will also sometimes slip in cocking a hammered gun.

12. Never carry a gun at the horizontal trail when with friends, whether loaded or unloaded, even when not expecting game. It should be carried upwards, resting over the shoulder, or downwards, resting upon the forearm; or be held at the small end of the butt, with muzzle pointing either directly upwards or downwards. An instance is recollected of a gun "going off" at the trail, and wounding a person, when the holder declared that the trigger was never touched by anything.



Photo by] *[Bunce Bros., Caterham.*

Your best dog may be shot by an inexperienced guest.

13. Handle or store any patent hammerless or so-called safe-action firearm just as you would any other. "Gun habits" should apply to all makes and ages of weapon.

14. Always take great care of cartridges as well as firearms. It takes the two to make an accident. They are better locked up when taken out of pockets or bag on

finishing shooting for the day. Accidents have been known to occur through boys finding cartridges and then seeking a gun to try them.

15. Always take out cartridges when going over a fence or gate, even when alone; also when going through a hedge or bushes while not expecting any occasion to fire at game; or when others are quite near, and all are passing over a fence or through bushes from one field or part of wood to another. When alone, a sportsman may fall and discharge his gun in getting over a fence; in such instances suicide might be suspected. If a possible danger be only momentary, the breech may be opened for safety.

When shooting pheasant or woodcock, it may be necessary to pass through bushes with loaded gun; but a sensible sportsman will then instinctively hold his gun-barrel preferably upwards, but occasionally downwards towards the ground.

Before getting over a difficult fence, it is better to put the unloaded gun over first, a little distance away from where you get over. Otherwise you may either injure yourself or the gun.

When covert shooting, it is safer to be able to see sky the other side of a bird shot at.

16. In thick bushes, always regard the possibility of some stranger being present within injuring distance; it may be a botanist or even a trespasser.

17. Never either pull or push a loaded gun horizontally through hedge, trees, or bushes.

18. Never fire at a wall, or very near a tree trunk. There will be danger from rebound or glancing.

19. Before helping a friend through a hedge or over a fence, make sure his gun is unloaded, lest he should have forgotten.

20. Never help a friend over a fence or stream by means of a grip on a gun, unless the gun be known to be then and there unloaded by both.

21. Be careful not to allow either snow or mud or any foreign body to lodge in a firearm barrel. Such may cause a serious bursting of the barrel. Never look into the muzzle end of barrels—always examine through the loading end.

22. Never throw a loaded gun over a fence or stream, even into the hands of a skilful catcher.



In the act of throwing a gun over a ditch, before helping a lady over. This is always a dangerous proceeding, whether the gun be loaded or not, and is only occasionally pardonable in fen districts where it is difficult to cross wide drains.

23. When walking cover with others, expecting game, always keep the gun held in both hands, with muzzle as far forward as is both safe and convenient, steadily keeping it at about the same angle all the time: it should be pointing towards the left, forward. Even somewhat experienced sportsmen are occasionally found to break this rule by making a careless swing of the muzzle backwards at each step, bringing friends into danger on their left — should the gun discharge accidentally, it may be through stumbling on rough ground.

24. Always learn the approximate position of beaters before commencing to walk cover. Many disastrous accidents have occurred through neglect of this rule. Boys' timorous



Gallantly pressing forward to help a lady down the bank into the wood, the sportsman topples over, and his gun discharges, just missing his friend on the left. (The butt of the gun is seen near right leg, pressed on the ground by the sudden fall.)

heads may be shot at in mistake for moving game in the bushes, by excited juniors—indeed, some sportsmen will fire at anything moving, in their ardour. It is on record that, many years ago, a well-known first-class shot killed two beaters on successive pheasant-shooting occasions.

25. Always move forward in line with friends walking cover, and be satisfied that others are also intent upon doing the same.



On the spur of the moment, an "amateur" may gallantly help a lady with loaded gun. She may suddenly grasp the trigger in her struggle up the bank.



The polite sportsman uses his left hand to pull away the branches, so that the lady may advance, while he thoughtlessly points the loaded gun towards her legs.

If one of a party be left a distance behind, he will be in danger of being shot, should another in line fire at game getting up behind. Similarly, one of a party moving too far forward may be "peppered" by those properly in line. It is true that crescent formation may be advisable, or moving forward with one end of a line in advance of the other, for the purpose of driving game in a certain direction, but the rule may be kept approximately, notwithstanding.

26. Never shoot at game which clearly gets up to another sportsman's gun.

27. Never either shoot along the line walking cover, or follow with pointed gun, game flying or running towards the line on one side or the other. This rule should always be observed, no matter how high a bird may fly; it may be dangerously broken by excited members of a party.

28. Always refrain from discharging a gun, even at the easiest bird, if not sure of the position of friends. There ought to be enough safe shooting for all, or not at all. It is amazing how selfish some men can be when the desire may be to shoot the biggest bag. Excitement tends to accident when game is plentiful in the field. Some thoughtless beginner may follow a bird round a half-circle and blaze away straight into his friends, afterwards saying he is sorry, and "had no idea," and "cannot understand how," and so on.

29. Always be especially careful, when game breaks backwards, to bring your gun to the right-about with an arc sweep skywards and not horizontally.

30. Never discharge firearms too near horses; and first take an opinion from the driver concerning distance. Many a time, in the history of harvesting, have horses bolted when a shot has been fired too near the reaper in action, the driver falling off, to be cut to pieces in the knives, or the horses



The proper way to struggle through bushes; both guns are seen held upright.



The guns have been carelessly placed on the ground, even pointing towards members of the party. One of the guns is also full-cock, and if the dog should put its foot on the trigger, there would probably be another "distressing accident in a shooting-party" to be recorded.

running amok into men and things. Nor should a man take a gun with him on the reaper. An instance occurred recently in which a horse was shot in the legs by a gun falling from the reaper.

31. Never forget that dogs are men's best friends, and may suffer from carelessness or disregard. Always lose a shot rather than run the risk of touching a dog with a single shot-corn. Once injured, a dog will never forget it.

32. Always unload a gun when resting with others for the least amount of refreshment. You may intend to have one drink, but be persuaded to take the whole luncheon and forget the guns.

33. Always unload before getting into a shooting-cart. If shooting from a cart, always unload before getting out.

34. When shooting wild-fowl in the dusk, always call out or whistle sufficiently before commencing, in case any other sportsman had previously arrived near the same spot. In the alternative, should there be wild-fowl as you approach a likely spot, make your first shot at them skywards or straight into the moonlit stream, but never where another sportsman might possibly be hidden.

35. When two or more sportsmen are shooting about hedgerows, or where the country is very broken, there should be a recognised director of proceedings. Hap-



While taking luncheon, the guns should be placed together, where they are obvious, standing upright, with butts on the ground, and leaning on something securely.

hazard shooting at driven birds may be a dangerous form of sport if one of a party has strayed from his proper position on account of careless directions at first.

36. Sportsmen on either side of a hedge should keep opposite one another and close to the hedge: they should never shoot through or into a hedge, but along the side.

37. When shooting from butts, it is just as important to have regard for your neigbour as when walking cover. If a guest cannot be trusted, he might be put behind a butt provided with safety-guards. But these make dangerous training, all the same; it is better to invite only those who are safe without safety-guards, for obvious reasons. A well-known sportsman of title and his gillie were recently shot by a friend in a Royal shooting-party, the friend having fired at a bird passing between two butts.

38. Always unload when shooting is finished for the day.

39. Always examine arms again, on reaching home, before finally depositing.

40. Greater care should be taken in the handling of revolvers than of guns or rifles.

As indicating possible fatality, even under apparently the most careful and wise precautions, I may give an instance that occurred during my school-days. A gamekeeper had been instructed to take myself and two school-fellows to a field of corn being reaped, where we might receive further instruction and warning in the use of a gun. Our tutor, after taking us through all the preliminaries of loading, carefully placed us at various distances, so-far apart, outside the standing corn. We were to wait for rabbits bolting, and to shoot carefully and straight, mindful of men working amongst the stooks all round rapidly being formed. While waiting, we were visited each in turn, and told of accidents that had happened and might happen—how horses and men had been shot, how teams had bolted and labourers' legs had been cut off by the reaper, and so on. We had waited patiently, and made odd shots, when our tutor himself got excited at our misses. He himself at length fired, killing right and left, until a scream was heard. All stopped, horror-stricken, and hastened towards a labourer, shot in the eye by a pellet, as he turned round a stook, by the gamekeeper himself!

As an instance of danger from an unaccustomed sportsman of the office-desk and rising-in-salary type, I can think of nothing worse or more aggravating than an incident that once occurred to a party of experienced old sportsmen who had taken their seat in a dog-cart, in order to be driven from one part of a farm to another, and were waiting for our first-season youth to come and take his seat. He came along with gun at a dangerous trail, but only pointing towards the horse's legs, so nothing was said to him by seniors who supposed that at least he had drawn his cartridges. Passing round to the back of the cart, he raised his gun with muzzle upwards. Holding it by one hand near the trigger, he proceeded to catch hold of the cart by the other hand and to hoist himself upwards. He swung the muzzle of his gun round, covering the heads of those seated in front, lighting their pipes innocently, and paying no regard to the laggard taking his seat behind. This act at once sent a shudder of annoyance through a friend seated at the back, who had been momentarily agonised by the danger of crass ignorance pointing right at him. The observer had just shouted out, "Keep your muzzle away, for Heaven's sake, man, and give me the gun!" when the youth's foot on the back step slipped, and something catching the trigger, off it went with terrifying report, the charge just passing the ear of one of the front occupants of the cart.

REFERRED TO ARBITRATION.

By OSWALD WILDRIDGE,

Author of "Margery Manesty," "Paul Musgrave," etc.



CCASIONALLY, in his moments of idleness, when the reflective mood lay heavily upon him, and he lounged upon the taffrail, watching the waves chase each other astern, William Boundy, better known as Bill, master and owner of the brig *Argonaut*, had it dimly borne in upon him that once upon a time a woman, with hair turned grey and cheeks deep furrowed, had called him "a bonny laal bairn," had stroked his face with hands that looked so red and hard, yet to the touch were soft as the down upon the petrel's breast, had even kissed him, and with the kiss breathed a benediction on his head. Also it seemed to him that, in a far-away time, he had lived in a house on land, had crouched by a hearthstone whiter than the horses that ride upon the Solway bore, had actually dined from a table shrouded by a snowy cloth, and even slept in a bed with downy pillows and real curtains. All these things Bill Boundy dreamed as he lolled upon the rail, and the *Argonaut* dipped her shapely nose into the laughing waters, and her tapering spars rocked this way and that, pointing from star to star—dreamed and woke to wonder of its truth. "A bonny laal bairn!" It may have been so, long, long years ago, for life has strange possibilities, but all he could be certain of now was that he was Bill Boundy, owner of the dirtiest craft on the Allerdale register; Bill Boundy of the tousled hair and tangled beard, unkempt, unwashed, uncared for; Bill Boundy, whose boat was a reproach to the port, and he a reproach unto himself.

Never, in all his musings, however, did regret give birth to condemnation, and the doubtful merits of analysis he refused to test. For the "why" of things he never lost a moment's sleep, and life's "hows" gave him no concern. From year end to year end he sailed the seas, merely a contented animal, and it was only when the winds were out and the waters raged that he lived the life of a man. Then Bill Boundy's back stiffened straight and hard as one of the *Argonaut's* spars, his eyes flashed with the joy of strife, and his voice rang firm, strong, decisive—the voice of a man whose brain was awake, whose heart had yet to quiver to the first touch of fear.

That was Bill Boundy in the storm days, but, alas, his heroic moments were only for the handful of mariners who waited on his word! To the folks on shore he remained a creature of despite and derision, a man who was "as dirty as his ship," and whose ship was "as dirty as its master." Inasmuch as he was a master mariner, it is safe to assume that his jacket originally formed part of a good serge web; but no man might make the assertion with absolute certainty, and when Bill made the great discovery of his life, its surface was a combination of tar, rust, grease, and the drippings from Bill's platter. In the matter of buttons, moreover, it indicated an economical mind, for Bill was quite content if there was one on which he could rely. Around the tops of his boots, innocent of all polish save that imparted by grease, his trousers drooped a circle of distressful fringe, and his head was covered by a cap which, if fo'c'sle tales were true, Bill's uncle had worn ten years ago, Bill having adopted it, not because he grudged the money for a new one, but because its fit saved him the exertion of purchase.

Thus the man, and as the man, so the ship. From truck to keelson the *Argonaut* was her master's complement. Her decks grimy with the stain of the years and much coal-dust; her figurehead disconsolate for the loss of its Roman nose, bumped off against the quay wall at Derry, both eyes washed out by the salt of many seas, and minus all its garb of gallant paint; her spars grey and gaunt, ironwork scaled with rust, the sails a collection of canvas patches, brown on grey and grey on brown, and the rigging a riff-raff of splicings and frayed ends.

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Nor did the similarity between skipper and craft end here. Alike in their vices, the twain were equally agreed in their virtues, and the men who knew were always ready to bear testimony that both had many good points. Only in appearance did the *Argonaut* rank as a poor ship. Out upon the waters there were few vessels of the Solway fleet with a finer turn of speed. With the wind on her beam, she would snuggle her clipper stem into the sea and bound forward into the whitened furrow of her own cutting; and when it came to pointing, she would walk away from most of her rivals. She was a sound ship, too, for Bill Boundy's indifference was limited to externals—"paint was nothing but show and vanity"—she was a well-fed ship, also, and her fo'c'sle housed a contented crew.

As a matter of course, Bill's failure to attain the normal standard was darkly resented, and critics such as Solomon Manby, who in his day had boasted "a deck off which t' squire might have eaten his meals," would have had the offender put in irons; whilst the dictum of Bob Sanderson, a recognised authority on theological problems, that "it was only to be accounted for by human depravity an' original sin," met with ready acceptance. In this, however, Bob was in error. For his unfortunate preference for a quiet life Bill Boundy had to thank the ill-starred day when his uncle, the lonely old man who had housed him, fed him, and given him of his best as a substitute for a father's devotion and a mother's sacrificial fidelity, magniloquently waved his hand—a gesture embracing the *Argonaut* from stem to stern-post—and declared: "It's all for thee, lad, ivvery bit on it. Just thoo larn t' ropes, do thy duty, and help to keep t' oald craft afloat, and when thy uncle's gone to meet Davy Jones, thoo's hev t' ship." In that moment Bill parted with initiative, bade farewell to ambition. Henceforth effort made no demand upon him, for his future was safe. The *Argonaut* became a neglected ship, and her skipper a neglected man.

II.

HER hatches battened down, her deck a distracting litter of odds and ends, the *Argonaut* waited for the rising of the tide, and, arms at rest upon the aft companion hood, her skipper waited also. Most of the crew were away back in the town, but, a lonely man and loveless, Bill Boundy had no good-byes to utter—for him there was no parting benediction—and so, pipe between his teeth, he sprawled the time away. Mentally his condition was one of absolute calm. Departure aroused no conflict of emotion within his breast; coming and going, roving and resting, all were part of his common round, part of himself, and his sprawl was the mark of his content.

Shadows cast upon the deck passed their length unheeded, but at last he realised that one of them was stationary, and, glancing up to the quay, he discovered that a pair of blue eyes were taking stock of his brig, and that a pair of daintily moulded lips, at present curved in lines of scorn, were expressing deep disapproval of the grimy confusion rioting upon its boards. Now, many girls had looked upon the *Argonaut* and laughed, and the skipper had seen and heard, and at once forgotten; but this girl was not as others, and though Bill could not have defined one of the points of difference, he realised that she was good to look upon, and so he allowed his eyes to linger on her face. They were still resting there when the girl turned from the fo'c'sle to the poop. The blue eyes met the brown, and then, wonder of wonders, red upon the tan, Bill Boundy's maiden blush, crimson also on the rose-bloom pink, the first time woman had coloured because of Bill Boundy's look. Jerkily the man rose from the hood and rolled to the further rail, and when he again turned to the wharf, the girl was briskly walking townwards, and in that same moment all his old self-satisfaction fled. Something had been ripped out of his life; something new had entered. Bill Boundy had come to grips with the spirit of discontent.

In a dull, dissatisfied way, he ambled across the poop, but with his foot upon the cabin stairs he paused, and, calling to Swash, the mate, he asked: "I say, Ben, d'ye know that girl?"

"What—that one lookin' at t' ship a minute sin'?"

"Aye."

"Oh, that's Cap'n Fairish's lass—Kitty, Ah think they call her. Trim little craft, ain't she?"

Bill moodily nodded his head and plunged out of sight. Entering his cabin, he threw himself on the ragged cushion covering the bench, but in a second was on his feet again, frowning, angry, peering into every corner of his tiny home. Disgust had laid its hand upon him now.

"Faugh!" he ejaculated. "What a dirty hole! I wonder how she'd look if she saw this?"

Then he flicked his bandanna, not over-clean, from his pocket, and, running it along the ledge which served him as a book-case, pipe-rack, and general hold-all, wiped off the dust.

The reformation of Captain Bill Boundy had begun.

A ruder manifestation of the great change was sprung upon the crew of the *Argonaut* when Ben Swash dropped nimbly down the fo'c'sle ladder primed with an order from the skipper for the holystoning of the deck.

"There's something queer going to happen this voyage ; I never heard the like of it," he began, by way of breaking the news gently ; and then, diplomacy failing him, he blurted out the dire intelligence.

A chuckle from the bunk in the dark corner over his shoulder brought the mate round upon his heel.

"Here, stow that, Tom Carmichael!" he roared. "There's no play-acting about this, I can tell ye, and that's a fact ye'll soon find out."

Amazement, incredulity, alarm stamped upon their faces, the three men stared at the mate, with never a word to voice any of their conflicting emotions.

"Thoo doesn't mean it, Ben?"

Ned Bewsher was the first to recover his speech, and he followed his question by rising from his chest and advancing across the floor. Sam Fawcett came from the other side, and Tom Carmichael, still in his bunk, leaned half over the edge the better to catch the mate's reply.

"Of course I mean it. In a few minutes it'll be your watch above, and I tell ye the skipper's given orders that you've to set to and holystone the deck. I dooted at first whether we'd such a thing as a stone on board, but Sandy tells me there's a few stored away, an' he's getting them out. My sarty, lads, you should hear him!" The mate's face relaxed into a grin. "When Ah told him, he looked as daft as the best on ye ; then he started on Kirjath-Jearim, and now he's chunnering out all the jaw-breakers in t' Bible to keep himsel' frae swearing. Eh, it's fine!"

It was no use. Laughter had lost its quality of infection. Humour was all very well in its way, but not when comfort was menaced by a holystone. Amazement was succeeded by resentment. Mutiny—strenuous, unreasoning rebellion—effervesced in the breasts of the watch, and the mate, noting the signs, instantly rallied to the side of authority.

"Now, then, look alive!" he testily cried, as he mounted the ladder. "Look alive and get on deck wi' you, or some of you'll be suppin' sorra!"

A groan fell upon his ears as he reached the fourth step. Tom Carmichael had thrust one foot out of his bunk. As he placed both on the grimy planks, he thus delivered himself—

"Weel, this caps Dick's hatband! I've sailed aboard the *Argonaut* ivver sin' oald Tom Boundy slipped 'is cable, and Ah thowt Ah'd stay as lang as she or me floated, but I'se nut noo. I'se run at first chance. She's bin a gay, cosy little brig, a come day, go day, God send Sunday craft, an' noo we've to turn her upside doon an' mak her into yan o' them nasty speckless ships wheer it's aw worry an' scrub. Poor oald *Argonaut*, thoo's seen thy best days!"

Misery written all over his face, Tom reluctantly clambered to the deck, where for the next hour the swish of water and the grinding of stone upon sand mingled with the strumming of the wind in the cordage. Down below in his cabin Bill Boundy sat and listened to it all, and at intervals, as the sun-rays streaming through the deck lantern fell upon offending patches, he wiped the dust away, muttering as he did so—

"I will, I will! I'll make a throo job of it. I'll not be ashamed of my ship the next time she casts her bonny eyes upon it."

The ragged black beard drooped down upon the guernsey, worn in place of vest because it relieved him of the worry of collar and tie, and boasting a dozen darns of many conflicting shades of blue, drooped lower and lower, and in silence he plodded through a maze of black regrets and bright-hued plans. The spirit of perplexity still held him when he went on deck and broke into a moody pacing of the poop, and the crew, gathering forward, well out of earshot, discussed the mystery that had robbed the skipper of his smile, and threatened to convert him from the merry-hearted comrade into a real marine autocrat, and at the same time to filch from them their luxury of do-nothing hours. Nothing further having happened to give weight to their forebodings, it was generally agreed, long before the Head of Innishowen was raised on the horizon, that they had been victimised by a passing whim, and by the time the point had fallen astern, and the *Argonaut* was beating up the lough on which the walls of Derry coldly frown, the thing had been dropped into the limbo of trifles not worth remembering.

Three days later it all came back again—came in such a fashion that Sandy Falcon, ere he could summon Kirjath-Jearim to his aid, was trapped into cursing the day on which he saw the light—came, so to speak, with a cart which dropped sundry drums of paint on the brig's deck, and another laden with an acre of brand new canvas of the weave out of which sails are sewn, and a third with a pyramid of rope, and another which discharged its boxes and its parcels into the skipper's cabin.

All these and others snugly stowed away, the *Argonaut* sheered off into the northern seas; and when the winds swept her between the cliffs of Trondhjem, there was the reek of paint about her, and the deck had lost its grime; and when a month had run its course, and she cast anchor in Falmouth Roads, she bobbed and curtsied in all the pride of a new suit of rigging. At last she came back to Allerdale with Black Sea grain underneath her hatches, and to the men who watched as she followed the tug past the pierhead, she was a strange ship, for her gleaming sides and whitened sails were as those of a brig spick and span from the launching-ways.

When they read her name, they marvelled, and when they looked upon Bill Boundy, they spoke to each other of a miracle. For the skipper, like his ship, was a clean man and garbed in new-made clothes, even to his first starched front and his first tie, selected, as only its wearer knew, because of its harmony with a certain pair of eyes.

And it came to pass that, in the glory hour of a certain eve, the girl with the blue eyes walked along the sea-girt hills, Bill Boundy by her side; and again the watchers talked of the miracle, and this time they added—

"'Tis Kitty Fairish who has wrought it."

III.

WHENEVER a crisis cropped up in the Fairish household, Captain Ned was wont to meet it with the declaration that he could never have thought he would have missed his wife so much, and that if only she had been spared to that particular moment, to assist him in the subjugation of that precise set of circumstances, he would willingly have sacrificed every stiver he had wrested from life.

He made the declaration for the first time even before the bearers had entered the house for her burying. He repeated it nearly every day for a month afterwards; again when Kitty and Nell required new frocks, and he was consulted on the question of cut and cost; again when Kitty decided that she was a child no longer, and must wear her hair done up, yielding, however, for a while when her father begged her to remain a lassie just a wee bit longer, adding, as usual, that he did wish her mother had been spared, for she would have known what was the proper thing to do, and he never thought that he could have missed her so much as he did just then. Once more he made the confession when, long after Allerdale had seen into the heart of Bill Boundy's conversion, the scales fell from his eyes too, and he perceived that a double siege had been laid to his little citadel, and that for him there could be no conclusion save capitulation—that Bill Boundy's visits were not merely marks of Bill's new life, and that David Tweddle's calls were not the neighbourly visits to himself he had counted them.

Somehow it seemed as though the bottom had fallen out of his world. His Kitty and his Nell had been his for such a long time; they had filled his thoughts through all their motherless years; he had abandoned the sea years before he would have done, had his wife been left to him, and in his blindness he had never seen the possibility of separation. And now—now—Kitty was drifting from him; another year or so, and Nell, too, would go, and the old home would be silent, its walls no longer ring with girlish song, laughter be no longer heard therein. Fearfully he peered into the future and beheld the blackness of desolation. Death only had he counted as cruel, and now life seemed equally ruthless. But yet, when he came to think it over again, he saw that he was wrong. Life had really been very gracious to him. He had had his Kitty for twenty years, his Nell for eighteen, and they had made his home a Paradise for him. He was growing into an old man now, soon he must slip from the moorings upon his last voyage into the unknown, and his girls would need other arms as strong as his, hearts as faithful, else their days would be lonely and their lives cast upon a dreary sea. Yes, the more thought he bestowed upon the subject, the deeper his measure of satisfaction, and in the end he rejoiced within himself because of Kitty's lovers. It was awkward, of course, that there should be two of them, but even in the plurality there was the advantage of selection. Kitty could have her pick. On that point there must be no mistake, and once he had made up his own mind as to which man was the better of the two, he must assist his girl in her decision.

For days thereafter Ned Fairish went



"'Cap'n Ned here has a lass that's oald enough to be wedded.'"

about with an air of gravity resting heavily upon him. Twice, had anyone followed him, he would have led them to the Low Church—low in the geographical sense as distinguished from the "up street" church, which was geographically "High"—and there he lingered over a well-trimmed grave so long that, when he reached the capstan at the harbour end, the dog-watch had dissolved.

On the third day, however, he foregathered as usual with the cronies, and after five distinct attempts succeeded in blurting out the confession that the skipper of the *Argonaut* was giving him some concern.

"The lubber," he explained—"he's wanting to—take my Kitty from me! He's not said so yet, but I ken it's coming, and as David Tweddle is of the same way of thinking, I'm in a bit of a quandary. I can't make up my mind which o' the lads is better than t'other, and I must see to it that Kitty doesn't pick t' wrong 'un. What do you think?"

These veterans of the dog-watch, be it here explained, were all described in the register as "Master-Mariner—retired." Since the world began, none save those who held a master's papers had been admitted to the sacred circle, and retirement from the toil of the sea formed the sole right of entry. The moment he had seen his vessel tied up for the last time, the skipper, be his command a full-rigged clipper or only a Solway schooner, was at liberty to take his place in the group which gathered daily by the harbour capstan or under the lighthouse on the breakwater.

Whatever its numbers, the watch was noted for its similarity. Upon each face there was the tan of the sea. Each figure was clothed in the same distinctive garb—silk hat of limpish brim and body atrociously befurred, cut-away coat, and broadcloth trousers, whilst upon each pair of lips the Goddess of Silence had laid her finger, and it was only at rare intervals that they gave way to speech. Even then their method of approach was one of extreme caution, and when Ned Fairish presented his case for their consideration, Solomon Manby's gruff "Oh, aye," and Jerry Brash's equally cold "To be sure, noo," were the only responses vouchsafed. But

Ned knew his men, and he was in no way disconcerted.

During the next three days the conversation rarely rose above monosyllables, but on the fourth, when, in the wake of the ebbing tide, the five ambled shorewards and came to their moorings by the lighthouse, Solomon Manby announced that he had been "thinking over this business of Ned's lass."

"Aye!" from three of the group, and an anxious glance from Captain Ned.

Puff, puff, puff, went the pipes, and for full five minutes not another word was spoken. Then, spreading out his fingers that he might score off his points upon them, Solomon began.

"Aye, I've been turning it over in me mind, an' I think I can see t' course that's to be steered. Mind, I'm not at all sure aboot it, for, so to speak, we've no chart, but it's worth looking into.

"Now, then, here's where we are"—beginning with his forefinger. "Cap'n Ned here has a lass that's oald enough to be wedded. Lately two young chaps have begun calling at Cap'n Ned's house. What for? To crack wi' t' Cap'n? That's not likely when there's a bonny lass aboard—never has been, and never will be. If you'll just make a dead reckoning, I'se warrant you'll find out that they care next to nowt about Cap'n Ned, but a good deal aboot his lass.

"Now, then, what? Quite natural like, Cap'n Ned's anxious that his lassie shall have t' pick o' t' bunch, an' he wants to help her with his counsel, an', if she chooses wrong, to put her right; but he canna make up his own mind whether one's better than t'other, or t'other's better than which.

"Now, what's to be done?"

Solomon had reached his little finger by this time, and passively, their faces revealing no concern, three of his four comrades concentrated their gaze upon its tip. But Ned Fairish was evidently out of hand; the man who had battled with a hundred tempests without a tremor was all a-tingle with excitement.

"Now, what's to be done?" Solomon repeated, and then, turning to Ned, he emphatically declared: "Why, man, there's only one thing for it—you must submit the matter to arbitration."

Captain Ned's face clouded. This promised no assistance—bewilderment, rather.

"Arbitration!" he feebly gasped.

"Aye, arbitration, that's what I said," Solomon assured him, and with a sudden access of enthusiasm he continued—

"It's a grand thing is arbitration. It's one o' them subjects to which, withoot any presumption, I can claim to have paid special attention since I laid up on shore, an' I've convinced myself that we'll never sight t' millennium until every bit randy is settled on them lines, from war to broken windows an' family jars.

"What, now! Here's five on us. We've gathered gear enough to see throo without fashing ourselves any longer. We've all had as much eddication as any man needs, we can box t' compass, so to speak, work oot a dead reckonin', an' strike a bargain; an' tho' Lanty there gets a few extravagant notions now an' agen, t' rest on us has enough common-sense to balance matters.

"Well, now, suppose Allerdale makes up its mind to have no mair to do wi' lawyers, an' us five are appointed a sort of court of arbitration. There's many a score of cases that run away wi' poonds we could settle for a few shillin', an', of course, t' money would mount up in time, an' we might share it out, say every five 'ear. A bit on it might go till t' Navy's upkeep, an' I'd hand over a few poonds till t' National Debt, an' we might spare a bit for t' Queen to buy hersel' a new croon now an' agen, or it might be spent on whatever t' time an' occasion demanded."

"Man, but it's a fine scheme," Ned Fairish interrupted—"fine, an' if I can give you a lift with it, you can reckon on me. But how do you propose to settle this little business of mine?"

"I was coming to that," Solomon responded, "and I'm obliged to you for what you've said. About your own case, what I've got to suggest is that we appoint an arbitration to settle whether your Kitty shall be wedded to Bill Boundy or David Tweddle.

"Being an interested party, you'll drop out o' t' proceedings altogether. Supposing you consent to refer the question, you'll have a voice in t' choice of t' arbitrators, and after that you'll have nowt mair to do except receive the judgment and abide by it. That leaves four. There'll be two wanted for counsel, and I don't think we could do better nor appoint Sam Fletcher here and Lanty Hoodless—they're a pair of fine sea-lawyers. Sam has some gift o' t' gab, but circumspect wi' it all, and Lanty's gay fine in t' uptak'. There's mighty few craft that'll sail by him wi' lights out. D'ye remember, Ned, how he brought up that board of surveyors at Liverpool and left them with their sails all aback?"

Fairish nodded, a grim smile upon his face, and Solomon continued.

"Well, now, where are we? You're out, that leaves four; Sam and Lanty appointed to argy the case, that leaves two—me and Jerry Brash, and we'll be t' board of arbitration."

"And what's your sailing rules?" Fairish inquired, his tone suggesting a lack of conviction.

"Oh, there's not so many as t' Trinity Brethren steer by. As soon as you're ready, we'll fix a day, and when we meet Sam here'll—— You'll take Bill Boundy, Sam? That's all right. Well, as I was saying, Sam will tell t' board of arbitrators all that he knows in favour of Bill, and all that's set down in t' log against David, and explain why and wherefore Bill should make a better husband for your Kitty than t'other lad. An' after that Lanty'll lay aboard Bill and pull him to bits, and show how David's certain to make any woman happy that he's spliced till. Then Jerry and me'll weigh it all up, strike an average, and, as president o' t' board, I'll pronounce judgment in favour of ayder Bill or David."

Solomon glanced along the row of faces triumphantly. This was indeed the hour of his glory, though Ned's next inquiry cast a temporary cloud upon it.

"But," he asked hesitatingly, as one still not quite sure of his bearings, "how'll they take it? David's a bit hot-tempered, and, unless I'm much mistaken in my man, Bill's fair and bulldoggy-like, so that you're not unlikely to raise a tearing squall. You'll look fine if your arbitration ends in black eyes."

Solomon shook his head dejectedly, and from beneath his shaggy eyebrows he turned upon his comrade a look of reproachful pity.

"Eh, Ned, man," he exclaimed, "I gave you credit for a sharper outlook. Don't you see that Bill and David have nowt to do with it? They'll not be there. If you'll keep your tongue between your teeth, they'll never need to know they've been arbitrated on. It's not them we're boddering about, but you. We're proposing to free you fra t' responsibility of making up your mind. T' court of arbitration'll decide which of these two has to have your lass. If t' verdict goes in favour of Bill, when he comes to ask for her, you'll say: 'Take her, an' bless ye both,' and t' thing's done. If we decide for David, and Bill asks first, you'll tell him 'No' without any argifying or explanation, and that ends it so far as he's concerned.

"You see, t' beauty of arbitration in a case of this sort stands like this. Firstly, you don't need to worrit any further—you've passed all that on till t' arbitrators; secondly, one man may varra easily miss some important points and make up his mind wrongly, but with ordinary luck two ought to be certain to hit the mark; and, thirdly, if there should happen to be any blunder, you can always point to t' arbitrators as the men to bear the blame."

Captain Ned's face cleared. He had been so afraid of slipping, in spite of his precautions, into a mistake, of having his later years made miserable by self-reproach, and now—— He rose and gripped old Solomon's hand, and thus the board of arbitration was constituted.

IV.

SECRECY being one of the primary essentials in the grand inquest summoned to adjudicate on the case of Fairish *v.* Boundy and Tweddle, Solomon Manby was compelled to waive his preference for the harbour end as his courthouse and the capstan for his judicial throne, and consent to the acceptance of Jerry Brash's best parlour. Other doors were, of course, open to them, but Jerry had no women-folks to fash about, and that fact placed the matter beyond the pale of argument.

Here, then, behold the tribunal assembled for its first experiment in domestic arbitration.

Solomon, very dignified, at the head of the table; Jerry Brash, wiry, alert, cool as in days of stress upon his own poop, on the left; counsel for the rival lovers at the foot of the table, both very serious; the audience of one, in the person of Ned Fairish, fidgeting about in a deep arm-chair by the fireside, and obviously perplexed by it all.

Three taps, and Solomon is on his feet; but as he opens his lips, he hesitates, glances along the table—bare, save for its red and blue damask covering—and then makes appeal to the host.

"I say, Jerry, it's a poor sort of arbitration that this looks like. You'll have a few charts handy, suppose? Just root 'em out. I ken this isn't a salvage business quite, and sea-charts haven't much to do wi' courtship, but they'll make things look a bit more official-like.

"Ah, now we're ship-shape!"—as Jerry littered the table with a bundle of thumbed and weather-browned papers. "Now I can set my course an' go ahead."

Thereupon he plunged into an exhaustive survey of the case before the court, and then —fingers again in eloquent service—he presented the points on which they must frame their verdict and pronounce judgment, after which he called upon Sam Fletcher to plead the suit of Captain William Boundy.

Sam pulled out his snuff-box, with impressive deliberation helped himself to a thumbful, replaced the box, rubbed up his glasses, set them astride his nose, buttoned up his coat, and not till the last button had been twisted did he grip the edge of the table and draw himself out of his chair.

"Well, gentlemen all——" he began.

"You might address yourself to the chair, Captain Fletcher," Solomon interrupted, whereupon Sam repaired the omission and began again.

Harking right away back to Bill Boundy's baby days, he made fine play on his client's luckless start in life—father taken from him "before he got any of his rigging rove," deprived of his mother "just when he was shipping his ballast"—and assured the court that if it discovered any flaws in Bill's character, it must attribute them to the sorry condition of his boyhood.

"Why," he continued, "when a babby loses its father, it's like as if his spars had been swept away. I'll not say but what he may manage to rig up jury-masts and flounder intil harbour, but it's not likely. When the mother goes, it's like parting wi' t' sheet-anchor on a lee shore, and you ken what that means; but when they're both taken, it's like t' masts an' rudder an' anchor all being carried by t' board.

"I tell ye, it's wonderful, simply wonderful, how an orphan can manage to steer through life without landing on t' rocks and dropping to pieces. I've tried an' tried an' tried again to fathom t' mystery, an' I always land at t' same conclusion—that it's nothing but the loving-kindness of God that manages it."

Sam paused, his voice a trifle husky, and, seizing the opportunity, Ned Fairish tremulously exclaimed—

"That'll do, Sam—that'll do. I can see my way now, an' you'll not need to bother any more. I'll decide for Bill Boundy. I'm obliged to you——"



"'Tell him that t' arbitrators have reserved judgment.'"

"Captain Fairish"—Solomon was glaring across the table—"will you kindly remember that you're only allowed at this inquiry by the special privilege of the court? You've passed this question over for arbitration, and we'll pronounce judgment when we've heard all the evidence, and not half of it. I'm afraid," he added, "that I cannot compliment you on t' possession of a judicial mind."

Abashed by the reproof, Ned retreated in confusion, and counsel resumed his address, wherein he made light of Bill's more glaring faults—on the matter of the great conversion declared that a man who had let a ship get into such a pickle, and had cleaned it up as the *Argonaut* had been cleaned, had proved his worth to the best woman in the world, and, in proof of his faith, asserted that if he himself had twenty daughters, he would willingly allow Bill Boundy to have the lot. Even now he had not exhausted his theme; he had cunningly kept his great argument for the last, and, advancing from the particular to the general, he boldly expounded the doctrine that none save the mariner was entitled to wed.

"How can a landsman appreciate either a woman or a fireside?" he asked with withering scorn. "He sees his wife every day, she's oalus at his beck an' call; he knows nothing o' t' pain o' parting or t' joy of meeting. All that's reserved for him who goes down to the big waters in a ship; it's what ye might call his monopoly. Going home's nothing to a landsman, for why—because he does it two or three times a day, and slings his hammock there every night; but a sailor only sees his wife and bairns 'tweenwhiles, an' meeting them's like mounting till t' to'gallant mast o' joy. An' when he's sailing over t' seas, whether he's blowing his baccy in peace, wi t' bonny stars shining down upon him, or whether he's up aloft, holding on wi' bleeding fingers at a bellerin' sail, his mind's oalus wi' them, an' his thoughts are an everlastin' prayer.

"You'll make a mistake," he concluded, "if you give the lass to any land-lubber. They'll see too much of each other to keep their love bright an' fresh; but if you say Bill Boundy's to have her, she'll be as happy as a Mother Carey's chicken in a gale."

Blowing riotously as a grampus, Sam dropped into his chair and mopped the beads from his brow, and in obedience to the president's "Now for t'other side," Lanty Hoodless rose, and instantly addressed himself to one of the weakest spots in his rival's case.

"Sam here has told us," he remarked, with a jerk of his thumb, "that if he'd twenty daughters, Bill might have 'em all. Well, he's not got a score—he's got three; an' it's varra queer, seeing as sailors mak' such good husbands, an' wi' their father before them as a model, that they should every one have married landsmen. No, no, Sam Fletcher, it willn't wash.

"I'll admit that, for love and loyalty to their women-folks, there isn't a landsman alive can lick a sailor, bit think on t' life a sailor's wife has to live. Why, what—it's just purgatory! We've all on us known something of t' sea's greediness, but oor reality's nothing to what their fancy paints it. The wife of a seafarer never sees her man sail away without a shiver, an' till she looks on his face agen, every day she spends is just a spell o' misery and dread. Well I ken the day I sailed on my first voyage after I was wedded. I was aboard the *Boyne*—she went down wi' all hands among the Charity Islands the very next trip—and we were bound from Liverpool to Iquique, and Mary was standing at the dock gates to wave me good-bye. Man, never shall I forget the look in the poor lass's eyes as we swung oot intil the river. I tell ye it haunted me all throo t' voyage. All the time I knew that she was at home with a heart-ache; lying awake at nights listening for every howl o' t' winter wind, and thinking every capful of it a hurricane; wading throo t' shipping lists wi' her heart ready to loup intil her mouth, hungering for t' postman's knock an' yet opening the door wi' a trembling hand. That's the life a sailor's wife has to lead.

"As for Bill Boundy, he's not a bad sort, an' since he's made his brig look a bit more like a Christian, I've thought better of him than before; but when all's said and done, I can't get over the fact that, so to speak, he's only a convert, an', to my thinkin', converts are kittle cattle. You can never feel sure on them; t' oald life always seems to be calling 'em. Like as not, once Bill has won his girl, he'll tire o' t' holystone and paint-brush, an' t' *Argonaut*'ll soon be a lump o' bagwash, a more scandalous object than ever."

Up to this point Lanty's special pleading had closely approximated perfection, and under the melting influence of his eloquence Captain Fairish found all his favour of Bill Boundy's suit evaporating; and at last, in defiance of Solomon's wrath, he punctuated one of Lanty's glowing passages with a

second declaration that "that settled it," whereupon counsel for the landsman suddenly collapsed, and his elaboration of the personal claims and domestic virtues of the man whose cause he was appointed to plead dwindled down to a string of jumbled incoherences.

"The fact is, Solomon—Ah beg your pardon, Mr. Chairman," he lamely confessed —"Ah feel as if Ah'd got into strange waters, an' can make nowt of t' marks. There's nowt living so bad to reckon up as a landsman. It seems noo an' again that some o' t' mystery o' t' land itsel' has crept into his nature, and he's beyond me. So that's just where I'm boddered about David Tweddle. I'se not pledge myself for him any more than for any chap what's lived in a house all his life. Not that I've got anything agen him. To be sure, he's a bit too much of a collar an' cuff chap for my liking, but I dar'say he'll grow out o' that; an' if he lives long enough, he'll learn to smoke a good honest pipe instead o' so many dandy cigars.

"Anyway, if he's any bit like, he should make his wife a happier woman nor any sailor, for she'll have her man with her t' day by t' length, and there'll be no worry about the end of t' voyage. It's a risk in ayder case, an' I'se have nowt mair to do with it."

Lanty flung himself back into his chair, a frown glooming from beneath his shaggy eyebrows and upon his square-cut cheeks. He was hurt, disappointed, angry with himself. Somehow he felt that he had been guilty of an act of treachery. He had planned a vigorous plea for David Tweddle, and he realised that he had failed, and in failing had betrayed his trust.

Upon the court his climax fell with embarrassing effect. The situation had become charged with new complications; a new element of uncertainty had been created. Alone did Cap'n Sam Fletcher catch the humour of it all, but his manifestation of mirth was limited to a chuckle. The mild blue eyes of Ned Fairish rolled from one to the other in distressful appeal, whilst Solomon Mandy, lips firmly set, arms folded on the edge of the table, looked the things his tongue refused to say.

"And this is your sea-lawyering, Lanty Hoodless!" he roared at last, when the words came to him. "A bonny coonsel you make, with your prejudice and bias that you canna master! Fash, I'm shamed on you! Arbitration, indeed! I've a mind to rule t' proceedings null and void, and start 'em all over afresh!"

Signs of revolt on two of the faces giving him warning, Solomon made haste to add—

"Well, anyway, we can't settle t' business to-night. T' arbitrators'll have to consult, so I'll reserve judgment till—well, it's held over *sine die*, so to speak."

"*Sine die*, indeed!" Ned Fairish rejoined, with some show of temper. "An' how long'll that last? I want none o' your *sine dies!* T' *Argonaut's* due in two days from now, and if Bill Boundy comes an' asks for my Kitty, what have I to tell him?"

"Tell him," Solomon grimly made answer, "that t' arbitrators have reserved judgment, an' his courtin' mun bide till they've made up their minds."

V.

THE *Argonaut*, timber-laden from the Baltic, was off the port, and from the shelter of the little round house on the cliffs the men of the dog-watch awaited her coming; but in the thoughts of none did the arbitration find a place, for the storm winds were abroad, and the brig's advance was a frantic, panic-stricken flight.

Beaten in her dash for shelter within the wide-stretched arms of Ramsey Bay, she had swept through the jaws of the Firth, whither in days of stress the wind-harried waters madly crowd, but find no peace, and now, under poles bare of all their canvas, save a wisp of foresail and a flying jib, she scurried along, past the doors that opened to the place her crew called home, past the doors behind whose barriers love watched in agony.

There at the back of the sea-thrashed breakwater, lying snug at the feet of the hunching line of cliff-like hills, the harbour that no tempest might reach; but out and beyond these the frothing surf, the fury of the harbour bar, the war of tidal rage and current race, and these upon such a day no ship had ever dared and lived.

So the *Argonaut* went by, and in the hour of her passing men thought of the fangs of the Galloway shore, those iron teeth which, beyond the spray clouds and the mist of spume, grinned their menace of death, thought, too, of the sandy waste stretching far ahead—far, indeed, as the sea might travel, mile upon mile of it—sand in which no anchor will make its grip, greedy, insatiable, ever ready to seize the storm-tossed ship and hold it tight while wind and sea tear it limb from limb. Rock or sand, it matters little which—each is barren of mercy. In the hearts of the watchers Despair links hand with his twin-brother Dread.



"The longing in his heart deepens into the passion of prayer."

And what a crowd it is! Wives to whom the coming of love has but opened the flood-gates of sorrow; mothers from whom the sea has filched their joy and buried it fathoms deep; men who have fought the same grim fight for life, who will fight again, and, it may be, end their voyagings amid the rip and tear of rending timber—these and the greyheads of the dog-watch, into whose midst, as they hug the little stone house with the whitened base and the black dome, a woman steals. So engrossed are they upon the tragedy out there that none are conscious of her presence but the father into whose big brawny hand she slips her own, so tiny by the contrast and so cold. Ned Fairish gives one glance into his daughter's face, and, because of the thing he there discerns, the longing in his heart deepens into the passion of prayer.

Five miles away, the *Argonaut* is scudding fast for Netherport Roads; as well might she seek an anchorage on Burrow Point. Five miles! Soon she will be lost to sight round the rim of the land, and after that naught but those treacherous sands. Roaring, screaming, wailing, the winds charge up the Firth, and from the greater sea outside they bring upon their wings a cloud of blinding sleet and spikes of hail, and beyond the creamy fringe all becomes blotted out.

Five minutes pass, ten, and then, as the dun squall disappears, a gasp of amazement breaks from the lips of the crowd. A great change has been worked out behind the veil. Away in the distance the *Argonaut* is lying well over, almost on her beam ends; but to those who have trod the sea's mazy path, it is plain that her captain is still fighting, and is pitting his own skill and the strength of his brig against the tempest's might. Low down she lies, decks awash from bow to poop, and, as she hangs thus, the moments drag heavily as hours. Then slowly—oh, so slowly!—the *Argonaut*, with mighty plunge and thrashing of her sails, worries into the slant of the gale and draws over towards the shore where Scotland's borders lie.

"He's trying to beat oot to sea! God help him! My certes, he's a fine bit lad! Ah thowt he'd a tried to beach her up by Moricambe yon."

Inch by inch, staggering 'neath the buffeting blows of the sea, the *Argonaut* drags along her course—inch by inch, foot by foot, fathom by fathom. There is a master hand on the helm, and lion-hearted men who answer to the skipper's call. Now, canting over to the farther shore, the storm again flings its pall around her, and the watchers wait with straining eyes and gritted teeth; now on the other tack her black hull sheers out of the impalpable obscurity, and Hope again ascends her throne.

So the titanic fight is waged, brain against force, the skill of man against the might of the tempest. Such men as these were never born for defeat. The *Argonaut* will win—she must win. Bill Boundy will yet bring her into port when the winds have grown weary and the sea lies down to rest.

Ah! A cry of dismay rattles along the hillside. The brain has faltered, the skipper's judgment has failed him; too long has he held his ship on this tack—too long. Yet, no. Once more he demonstrates the possibility of the impossible; again he forces the *Argonaut* off, and she drags away from the land. But in a trice it seems she is pointing back again, and with the last tell-tale flapping of the canvas shreds, the light of revelation breaks upon the watch. Now they see the goal at which Bill Boundy aims. Not to the open sea is the *Argonaut* being compelled—the homeland is calling—he is beating into port, and over the Allerdale bar no ship yet has sailed with a hurricane such as this upon the waters.

Where will she strike? On Burrow Point, that mean, sandy tongue that, stretching its full length under the tide, lurks in wait for helpless craft? No hope for either ship or men if there the voyage is ended. In the sea-scooped hollow just behind the spit of sunken sand? There the ship shall surely perish, but the men aboard her may escape—there, and there only.

Half a league away, the Branty lifeboat plays hide-and-seek in the watery hills and valleys, but no nearer dare she venture, for what can a lifeboat do amid the pounding shallows? Down there, within hail of the big sand-bank, out of the submerged crown of which a pole with pile of brushwood projects warningly, a dozen men have gathered, stout of muscle, brave of heart, jerseyed heroes of the fo'c'sle, fustianed heroes of the mine, and, hempen coils in hand, their eyes riveted upon the oncoming brig, they await the chance to prove their heroism. Under the shelter of the breakwater on the other side of the seething channel, another group, and northward a third is hurriedly pressing. Thus they wait for the final act—wait for death.

Lurching, rolling, burying her nose deep in the waters, rearing aloft until her forefoot shows, down in the hollows, with

decks awash, high upon the crests, and the sea pouring in torrents from her scuppers, the *Argonaut* sweeps steadily onward, shoreward, shoreward all the time.

Now and again, as she reels on the lifting surge, the men upon her decks stand revealed, clinging to the life-lines, hauling at the ropes at infinite peril of the very lives for which they are so strenuously striving, and, towering above them all, the man who really counts. Bill Boundy's ship is in Bill Boundy's hands, and in the grip of his stout arms, his nerve, his tact, the strength of his heart, Hope's last tattered remnant is concentrated. Only for an immeasurable point of time let his nerve fail, his muscles relax, and the fight is over, everything lost.

His head buried in a deep sou'-wester, his body garbed in glistening, streaming oilskins, he stands lightly poised upon the poop and grasps the spokes of the wheel; and because this is a two-men's job, Ned Bewsher bears a hand on the other side, and as coolly as though only the westering breezes were abroad, he does the thing his captain's bellowing voice commands.

And ever the waters curl above the bows, and, breaking on the deck, sweep the ship from stem to stern; but never a quiver shakes Bill Boundy's arms, and from beneath the brim of his cap he gazes away to the rim of the nearing breakwater, against which the waves are being churned to foam. And when the waters smite the *Argonaut's* groaning timbers, and hurl her over into the smother until even her yards are awash, the master hands upon the wheel force her back to a level keel, and when, in angry protest, the ship shakes herself and curvets like a rebel horse, they merely hold on with all the greater tenacity.

Now her distance from the fretted beach may be reckoned by the length of cables; now, thank Heaven, the nose of the spit is passed, and now—from a hundred throats a cry of horror mingles with the diapason of the tempest—the *Argonaut* is sweeping straight across the harbour mouth, heading right for the breakwater's flinty front. A few seconds more, and she will be ground to matchwood. In spell-bound silence the watchers wait, all save a woman, who sinks upon her knees—she has a lad aboard the ship.

Only a cable's length, and still she plunges ahead. Now the men might almost leap from her bow to the pier, and now—miracle of miracles—a flash of whirling spokes, round go the yards, the sail for a moment backs against the trembling mast, and the *Argonaut* is pointing up the channel for home.

A cheer is carried over the hills and tossed above the roofs of the town, but it is frail and tremulous, for there is a bravery that stills the tongue, and gratitude that may only be voiced in whispers. Another shout, rollicking, triumphant, breaks forth when the tug, creeping from its sheltered nook, puffs ostentatiously down the fairway and makes offer of a tow. But the peril is past, and the pride of conquest has seized upon the *Argonaut's* skipper. Thus far he has brought his vessel, and with his own hand he will guide her to her berth. So he waves the tug-boat away, and when the watchers have streamed down from the hills and gathered from the shore, they find the *Argonaut* warping into the wharf, her skipper's face wreathed in a radiant smile.

Ropes made taut, the vessel snuggling close into the moss-green wall, a dozen men scramble over the taffrail and swarm across the poop to where Bill Boundy stands; and though their words are but few, there is a grip in the fingers, as they close upon the skipper's frozen hand, telling of praise for work well done, speaking a home welcome such as he has never had before.

Others follow in their train, and now a plank is pushed aboard, and women trip lightly over it, and love becomes articulate. Among them Sarah Salkeld—she who had remembered her prayers—and as she gathers her boy in her arms, she "praises God and Captain Boundy"; among them old Nanny Bewsher, and although her Ned has but one eye wherewith he may look out over a nose broken by a fall from aloft, she greets him as "Eh, my bonny lad, my bonny lad!" among them old Solomon Manby and his comrades of the dog-watch; and, last of all, Ned Fairish and Kitty, whose face is still white as Skiddaw's snow-cap, but in whose eyes there lingers the light of a wondrous joy.

On the shoreward end of the gangway she halts and shyly bids her father go alone; but Ned gently chides her for what he calls "such nonsense," and bids her follow.

"We must let Captain Boundy see how we appreciate him, my lassie," he says. "Never has a ship been handled on the Solway like the *Argonaut;* never has any man been seen to bring his boat into Allerdale like this. Come along."

So she follows her father to the poop, sees him reach out his hand, hears the first words

that fall from his lips, and then suddenly her father slips from her presence, a pair of resolute arms are thrown around her, she is drawn to the breast of a black-bearded giant in oilskins, whose lips shower kisses upon her face; and, forgetting father and all the crowd, and remembering only her love, she slips her arms about Bill Boundy's neck, over which the still dripping sou'-wester hangs, there where all the crowd may see, but it is only the skipper who hears her praise: "My brave lad!"

An exclamation from her father, a chuckle from Lanty Hoodless, the voice of Jerry Brash declaiming something about arbitration, reminds them that the situation demands explanation, and as Kitty, with downcast eyes, demurely withdraws herself from his embrace, her lover suggests retirement to the cabin, an invitation intended only for Kitty and her father, but somehow accepted by the dog-watch also. And there, seated at the head of the little table, with Kitty on one side of him and her father on the other, and the rest crowded upon the cushioned lockers, he explains how, on the night before he sailed, he had told Kitty of his love, and Kitty had confessed the very thing he wanted to hear, and then they had agreed to keep it a secret—their own glorious, golden-edged secret—until the *Argonaut* returned.

"And you'll let me have her, Captain Fairish?" Bill pleaded. "There's not a lassie in all the world like your Kitty. You ken something of the change she's made in me, but not all. In my reckoning I was just like a drifting ship without compass, and not wanting one, either, and she's simply set a course for me and given me the desire to keep it. She took my empty life in her hands and filled it with more good things than I can think on. You'll say I may have her?"

A quizzical smile overspread the face of Kitty's father, and when he spoke, it was Solomon Manby whom he addressed.

"It's awkward, this, isn't it, Solomon?" he said. "What about that arbitration? Are ye prepared with your judgment yet?"

A moment's pause, then Solomon jerked himself upon his feet, and his voice bellowed upon the timber ceiling.

"Arbitration be blistered! A man that can handle a ship as our eyes have seen Bill Boundy manage his brig to-day is above all t' laws of arbitration or any other law—he's a law till himself. He ought to do what he wants and have what he wants. He——"

"Here, what's all this about arbitration?" the skipper of the *Argonaut* broke in; and the puzzled look upon his face deepened when a tense silence fell upon the group, and the board of arbitrators glanced guiltily from one to another. Finally Ned Fairish blurted out—

"You mustn't heed that. It was all because I feared to make a mistake. I couldn't decide whether you or—or David Tweddle should have Kitty, and Solomon and the rest of 'em here undertook to settle it by arbitration. But you settled it yourselves. Take her, an' God keep you both!"

Over Bill's face a luxuriant, all-enveloping grin expanded, but Kitty turned to the president of the court, and, shaking a reproving finger, exclaimed—

"Oh, Solomon, Solomon, this is all your doing, I know! You dear, silly old man, I'm surprised at you! Fancy arbitrating on my—my—well, my affairs, and you never took me into account at all!"

Solomon's eyes widened and his jaw dropped. Then, slapping his thigh, he exclaimed—

"That's it—that's just it! I kenned there was a screw loose somewhere when we couldn't mak' up oor minds. It was Kitty's evidence we wanted!"

"And now you've got it," Kitty replied.

THE ADVENTURES OF GEORGE.

By EDGAR WALLACE,

Author of "Four Just Men," "The Council of Justice," "The Nine Bears," etc.

GEORGE GREGORY SANWORTH was regarded as the fool of the family. The Sanworths were a remarkably clever family; some people even went so far as describing them as brainy. Cuthbert Sanworth was a barrister of some note; Torre Sanworth wrote a history of Peter the Great which was accepted by the Sanworth family as the last word upon the reign; Christopher Sanworth was also a barrister, but made an income by writing satirical verse for a society paper; Grace Sanworth wore pince-nez, and was an authority on prints and old furniture; and old man Sanworth was an authority on most subjects, and it was admitted even by his children that he was a genius.

But George was a fool, having no gifts save that of knowing a good horse when he saw one. He dabbled in a shy way with chemistry and metallurgy, but he never referred to these accomplishments, knowing that he was the fool of the family.

There was no Mrs. Sanworth. The task of presenting to the world such a galaxy of genius had exhausted her desire for life, and she had died when George was a small boy, possibly heart-broken in the discovery that this last addition to the Sanworth family was a mistake and something of a failure. George knew he was a fool, because the family used to sit round and tell him so. Sometimes the information used to come in epigram, which he only vaguely understood, sometimes with brutal plainness, which made him grin uncomfortably, for he was a little sensitive.

In such an atmosphere George Gregory Sanworth lived for ten years, for he had been exactly ten when, by the unanimous vote of the breakfast-table, he had stepped into the position which is vacant in every family.

He accepted the situation philosophically—found some quiet amusement in it, if the truth be told, for he had the beginnings of a sense of humour, and might, under more favourable conditions, have shone as a humorist of the dry variety. He had no friends—no lasting friends, at any rate. Friendship could not outlive the exposure of the family. If he brought a boy home to dine, the guest began his visit in embarrassment and took leave in contempt; so George had nothing in the world but his own inside thoughts, his Bunsen burner, and his assorted chemicals.

When he was twenty-one, the Sanworths became absorbed with a breakfast-table problem. How should George invest his money? He had £600, left in trust by a maternal uncle, and on his twenty-first birthday there was a solemn signing of papers ("Write your name where the pencil mark is," said the lawyer), a great comparing of original drafts and sworn copies ("Put your initials against the words 'unless the said Gregory Sanworth should predecease me,'" said the lawyer fretfully), and, after many days, the transference to the legatee's account of a sum which, in a mysterious fashion, had dwindled to £564 3*s.* 4*d.*

"And now," said the family, after dinner had been hurried through that night—"and now what shall be done with the money?"

George wriggled uneasily in his chair, and murmured vaguely that "it was all right where it was."

"Stuff!" said the family. "Nonsense! Rubbish! How like George to leave his money in the bank, nibbling away at the capital from time to time!"

"A friend of mine would take George into his office," said Torre Sanworth thoughtfully. "If any man could turn George into a useful member of society, Falling could."

"Who is Falling?" demanded the resentful legatee.

A shriek of scornful merriment greeted his inquiry.

He did not know Falling—Falling, the pioneer of the Village Industries, the man who taught agricultural labourers the art of *repoussé* work!

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Grace Sanworth, recovering from her paroxysm of amusement, remembered that Falling was not a very good business man. Now that she came to think of it, why not "put" George with Kalestein's? Everybody knew these famous art dealers were commercially sound. "And, really, these art people make an awful lot of money."

"I can imagine," said Cuthbert, and waited for a silent audience—"I can imagine nothing more tragic than the spectacle of George buying a chromo-lithograph, and——"

"Before you people go any further," interrupted George, "I'd like to say that I have decided to go abroad."

There was a dead silence, and George went very red.

"I'm going abroad," he repeated doggedly.

Another silence, and Sanworth *père* settled his glasses on the bridge of his nose.

"May I ask why?" he demanded with ominous blandness.

"Because I'm jolly well going!" said George illogically.

"An excellent answer," said Mr. Sanworth, "but not sufficiently illuminating. Why?"

"Because," said George, after a pause, "I'm tired of all you clever devils, and I'm sick of hearing you gas at me from morning to night!"

"The worm," said Cuthbert *sotto voce*, "has turned."

"I'm tired of listening to people trying to be clever . . . epigrams . . . quotations from the poets . . . rotten!" he ended disconnectedly.

Thereafter the attitude of the family toward George was one of chilly politeness.

He made his preparations for departure unassisted by the advice or encouragement of his outraged relations. He was not asked what his plans were, and did not volunteer any information.

Only at breakfast, on the morning of his departure, did his father ask him a question.

"What time do you leave?"

"At four o'clock."

"Indeed," said Mr. Sanworth courteously. "I hope you have a good voyage. I suppose you have taken the precaution of booking a berth. I noticed your boxes were labelled 'Cape Town.'"

George regarded that reflection on his intelligence as an unfriendly act, and wisely said nothing.

"If I start arguing with these beggars, I'm done," said he to himself.

There was no other leave-taking. George went alone to Waterloo, and no farewell telegram awaited him at Southampton.

"A rum family!" mused George, watching the circling light of St. Catherine's from the stern of the *Walmer Castle*.

He shook his head, touched gingerly his breast-pocket, where five crisp bank-notes for one hundred pounds each were snugly hidden, and smiled.

"A rum family!" he said again. And, whistling a vulgar little tune, he went below to dress for dinner.

II.

GEORGE found a metallurgist in Johannesburg, who was a great metallurgist indeed, albeit young. He was a tall, youngish man, with a pair of steady blue eyes that looked at you with infinite calmness. He was a man after George's own heart, because he had no small talk, no repartee, and had only the vaguest ideas as to what was happening in that part of the world which was outside the realms of chemistry.

They spent a delightful evening discussing the effect of cyanide of potassium upon gold matrix, and finished up by reminiscences which, if they were put into book form, would be entitled: "Crucibles I have met."

"And," said the eminent metallurgist at parting, "if I can help you in any way, please let me know."

"I think I shall manage," said George confidently. "I shall just browse round, prospecting and making assays in my tin-pot way, and if I strike anything real good, I will let you know."

Did the faintest of smiles illuminate the face of the eminent metallurgist at the idea of George discovering "anything good" in a country every inch of which had been prospected? It is possible, but George did not notice it.

He went west, beyond Klerksdorp, and worked his way down to Fourteen Streams; he went north, beyond Petersburg, and came to the Crocodile River near Tuli Drift; he went east by way of Carolina. He went into the bad low country and found malaria.

For eighteen months he chipped and pounded and washed various unpromising chunks of rock, and grew a straggling beard, and learnt to speak Cape Dutch.

Sometimes he found the colour of gold, and assayed his find solemnly, writing long reports to the young metallurgist in Johannesburg.

The members of the Sanworth family knew nothing about him, because he did not write long reports to them. They spoke

about him ironically; it seemed a correct attitude to take up towards George.

Two years after George had left the parental roof, he struck the farm Vogelfontein, by Brakdorp, and outspanned his two mules on "Farm (497) Vogelspruit."

He took coffee with the owner of the farm, shook hands—a solemn ceremony—with the farmer's four sons and seven daughters, and received permission to prospect.

George had a theory about gold reefs which need not be particularised, because it would not interest the non-technical reader, but it had to do with the "dip" of a reef in relation to the presence of dolomite or something of the sort. Frankly, it was a ridiculous theory—as ridiculous as the idea widely held in a less enlightened age that a stone might be discovered that had the effect of transmuting metals. Yet, seeking this, a monk discovered gunpowder.

George Gregory Sanworth began his fantastic operations by cutting a section of a ridge at random.

He intended, by some wearisome process of triangulation, based upon the character and bearing of the strata he discovered, to arrive at a spot beneath which, at the distance of three thousand feet, the gold-bearing reef would be discovered. He had worked his theory before, but had never found gold.

For two long days, aided by his Kaffir boys, he dug and dug. He was not looking for gold in that particular spot—I would impress this fact upon you—but he found it.

A more prosaic happening could not be imagined than the discovery of the Sanworth Reef.

George, smoking a short briar pipe, squatting on the ground, slowly twirling his metal pan, a hot sun blazing overhead, and the smell of frying bacon.

"Hullo!" said George, with a perplexed frown. "Hullo! Well, I'm blest! . . . Colour . . ."

He put down the dish and stood up. His pipe had gone out, and he lit it with a sunglass, which was a long process and gave him time to think.

Thinking very deeply, but very clearly, he walked slowly back to the farm.

"You've got gold here," he said.

"*Ja.*" The farmer smiled and nodded. "You buy the option." He had made an income for years from impetuous and optimistic prospectors who had found "colour," but then they had never happed upon the Sanworth Reef.

George eyed him suspiciously.

"I tell you there's gold here," he repeated—he was a very honest young man.

"*Ja*, plenty of gold," said Cootze pleasantly. "You buy the option for two hundred pounds for one year, then I will sell you the farm for ten thousand. That is cheap."

George bought the option, and went off to Johannesburg, carrying with him sacks full of specimens.

The youthful-looking metallurgist was greatly interested, and he and George spent one hilarious evening discussing a new process for recovering gold from slimes.

More to the purpose, George was introduced to a stout man who had a suite of offices on the top floor of a palatial building in Commissioner Street. He was a florid gentleman, who wore a big white waistcoat, frayed at the edges from many laundry operations, and whose only jewellery was in the form of a gun-metal watch fastened to his person by a leather guard. He did not look like a millionaire as he sat there in his office, chewing a quill toothpick and regarding the roofs of Commissioner Street through the open window with a strained and troubled stare.

George told the story of his discovery, exhibited his option, displayed his specimens on the table, and produced his assays.

"Interestin'—very interestin'," said the millionaire mechanically.

"My own theory is," said George, "that the main reef is continued in a line parallel——"

"Very interestin'—very interestin' indeed," said the millionaire, intently regarding a bold sparrow which had perched perilously on a neighbouring chimney-pot.

George talked and talked, until he was out of breath, and then—

"Very interestin'," said the stout man. "I will send a man down. Good mornin'!"

George left the presence a little chilled.

He spent a pleasant week in Johannesburg, evolving an altogether new and preposterous theory in relation to gold-bearing quartz—a theory which, as the young metallurgist told him afterwards, was opposed to all known mineral laws.

Then one day, when seated in his bedroom at Heath's Hotel, surrounded by the *débris* of rejected data, a message came to him; and in obedience to the summons it contained, he climbed again to the top floor of the palatial premises in Commissioner Street, and discovered the millionaire, with the same

waistcoat—he identified a rust spot near the second button-hole—staring over the heads of the population.

"Sit—sit down," said the stout man, without removing his gaze from the window. "That Vogelspruit proposition—very interestin'."

He shook his head slowly, and repeated the information that it was indeed very interesting.

"Our man saw it—proved it. What do want?"

George was taken aback.

"Hey?" he said hesitatingly.

He really did not know what he wanted.

"Lucky young feller," said the millionaire with a sigh, as though George's fortune was a matter for regret—"devilish lucky young feller! What do you want?"

George was silent.

"Suppose we float it? Suppose it pans out all right?" It was the millionaire's turn to hesitate. He was evidently a man of no great command of language.

"Here!"

He swung round suddenly and stared at George.

"We'll buy a half share; pay you half in cash and half in scrip. What d'ye say?"

"All right," said George weakly.

"All right," repeated the other, looked at his watch, shook it, and put it to his ear. "All right. Have to buy a new watch. It's more than half-past seven, I'll *swear*. Now, Mr.—er—forget your name—come along on Saturday, and we'll fix things."

"Excuse me," said George nervously, "what do you think—how much——"

The stout man looked long and earnestly at George's boots.

"Hundred thousand cash, hundred thousand shares. Is it a deal?"

George nodded, not trusting himself to speak.

III.

GEORGE SANWORTH became almost a millionaire without any other than a few interested persons becoming aware of the fact. It is an astonishing thing that even in this age of enterprising pressmanship, one may do or be anything short of criminal without the world being any the wiser, always provided that you say or do nothing that is unconventional. Thus you may be the greatest scientist in the world, and just so long as you preserve a normal view on men and things, you will attract less attention than the obscure "professor" who gives his opinion, in the largest type, that stage fright is bacteriologically curable by the application of some especial virus.

George Sanworth did nothing fantastic. He did not give a dinner-party in Johannesburg, he did not tip the waiters at Heath's with one hundred pound notes, he did not order a special train to carry him to Cape Town, nor make extravagant outlays on flowers for the decoration of his cabin.

So he came back to England inscribed on the list of passengers as "Mr. G. G. Santworth," the fact that his name was spelt wrongly being conclusive proof of his obscurity.

One grey dawn he found himself standing in his pyjamas watching the restless white light of St. Catherine's trembling and dying on the far horizon ahead.

"A rum family!" he said, for the wheeling light awoke a memory.

He landed at Southampton, directed the despatch of his worn luggage, and came to Glazeborough by way of London.

The family was at dinner when he arrived unheralded, and it was only natural that they should put an altogether wrong construction upon the unexpected apparition of this brick-red young man—he had shaved off his straggling beard—in the shabby suit.

Consternation, suspicion, a little contemptuous amusement, all the emotions evoked in a well-balanced family that finds itself suddenly confronted with a problem, and that the problem of the returned prodigal, were evinced in the reception afforded to George.

"Oh, sit down, sit down!"—this testily from Sanworth senior. "I suppose you want something to eat."

"Why didn't you let us know you were coming?"—this resentfully from Grace.

"Brown paper parcel under his arm—packing cases coming by water—huge boxes of gold—ropes of pearls—diamonds by buckets—pieces of eight—wonderful—very!" murmured Torre.

George, bubbling over with his news, ready with one glowing word to light the train of the mine, went suddenly cold.

In a moment he lost all sense of embarrassment—more than that, he lost his awe of the family.

"Do you know, George," said Christopher Sanworth rudely—he had a mop of red hair, and he was poisonously bland—"your return reminds me of a little story told the other night by Eugene Thebier at a dinner."

"I don't care what you say to me," said

George, "so long as you don't read me any of your rotten poetry; but I would rather you shut up for about ten minutes whilst I tell you something. Is there anybody in this bunch of fricasseed genius who has made a study of the Stock Market?"

There was an awful silence.

"Because," said George slowly and without flurry, "if there is, he will know that Sanworth Reefs are at 10¼."

"What is that to do with us?" snapped his father.

"I hold a hundred thousand shares in that company—that's all."

He got up from the table, rolled his serviette, and stuffed it untidily into a napkin ring.

"You are jolly clever," he went on, "but I'm a millionaire, and can afford to be a fool. I'm tired of you—sick to death of you! You're all words and messy little penny-a-line phrases. I came back here because I wanted a home, and I find I have returned to the same old monkey-house!"

It was not a great speech—it lacked dignity, subtlety, and was, moreover, unfilial to a degree—but George, standing by the open door, his broad shoulders hunched, his hands thrust defiantly into his trousers' pockets, was without respect.

As afterwards related by members of the family, in his eyes was an "insane glare"; but this may be a pardonable exaggeration, due to the extraordinary impression his conduct conveyed.

"I'm going now," he said, "and I don't want to see any of you again, or to read your toshy verse"—Christopher shuddered—"or



"She did not look up as she reeled off the calamitous inventory."

to hear about your punk prints"—Grace shivered—"or to learn of your histories cribbed from other fellows' books"—Torre went pale and frowned terribly. "I think there ought to be a real home somewhere for a chap like me, and I'm going out to find it."

He slammed the door behind him, caught the edge of his coat between door and lintel, opened it roughly, and slammed it again.

His exit lacked dignity.

IV.

WHEN a man who is young, pardonably angry, and, moreover, a millionaire, strikes that part of London which begins at Aldwych and runs westward to Bayswater, lurid happenings are almost inevitable.

George, with his much-labelled luggage on the top of a four-wheeled cab—he was in no mood for taxi-cabs, being out of sympathy with civilisation—trundled over the bridge from Waterloo Station, mentally reviewing his position.

He felt horribly lonely and cautiously reckless—that is to say, he felt that convention demanded of him some proceeding of an outrageous character. At the same time he was anxious to avoid the variety of excess which would eventually bring him discomfort. Dissipation, he told himself, was not his line of country; intoxicating liquors made him ill; he had no taste in food—his favourite dinner was roast beef with Yorkshire pudding, and rhubarb tart to follow—and he disliked intensely anything approaching ostentation.

He drove to an hotel in Arundel Street, engaged a bed and a sitting-room, and strolled out into the Strand.

It was then a quarter to twelve. The theatres were closed, but the Strand was alive with people homeward bound, and in the neighbourhood of Charing Cross it was distinctly crowded. People thronged the side-walk, and there were wild little rushes for each motor-'bus that jarred itself to a standstill before the station. He was an idle and a thoughtful observer of struggling humanity for five minutes, then he resumed his journey westward, crossing Trafalgar Square to Pall Mall.

How might a man spend a million pounds? What extraordinary happiness might he find in its possession? He could equip an expedition to discover the South Pole—George did not want to discover the South Pole—or found a hospital, or racehorses. George shook his head.

He was crossing Pall Mall, and a motor-car, flying along towards St. James's Street, squeaked warningly.

George was no judge of pace, beside which he was immersed in his problem.

The mud-guard of the car caught him and threw him toward the pavement, and an unsympathetic lamp-post received him coldly.

* * * * *

He was lying in a very pretty room. The window was open, and outside he could hear the clip-clop of horses and the honk-honk of motor horns.

He was dreadfully restricted.

That sentence describes his sensations. There was a strap, or something, to restrain the movement of his left arm, and a veritable pillow of some hard substance fastened to his right side. With admirable calmness he diagnosed his injuries—broken ribs, fractured arm. What about his head? He moved it gingerly, and, to his great relief, nothing happened. Yet there was a dressing of some kind affixed. "Superficial injuries," he concluded, and lay quietly enjoying the experience of being alive—a sensation peculiarly the possession of men who have already decided in their minds that they are dead.

"Now, my friend, you must take some of this."

The room was dark, save for a shaded lamp, and the nurse was very pretty. She held a feeding-cup in her hand, and George shuddered.

"I'm sorry," he said in a very hoarse voice, "but I've just had dinner."

The girl smiled, stooped, and put a cool hand under his head and lifted it slightly.

"That is a much more reasonable statement to make than the one you made yesterday," she said.

He frowned. What did he say yesterday?

She guessed the thought that was in his mind.

"You know you were very cross yesterday," she said, and put the spout of the feeder to his lips. "You said that you'd discovered a new motor-car mine, and it was worrying you terribly, because every time you blew up the rock, you spoilt the varnish of the car."

He grinned guiltily.

"I don't remember saying anything yesterday," he said. "How long have I been here, and what hospital is this?"

"You have been here nearly a week, and this isn't a hospital," was the answer. "This

is my house, and I knocked you down on Saturday night."

He thought a while, ordering the matter to his satisfaction.

"Oh, did you?" he said, and fell asleep.

* * * * *

"I think that you are strong enough now to tell me who your friends are."

It was morning again. He had a sleepy recollection that a strange nurse had remade his bed and sponged his face, but this was the pretty one back again.

"I have no friends, only relations," he said, unconsciously paraphrasing an ancient joke. "I am a millionaire," he added inconsequently.

"Indeed?"

The polite incredulity annoyed him. She was humouring him, and he had no wish to be humoured. Later in the day she gave him details of the accident.

"We were coming back from the theatre; the chauffeur tried to avoid you, but you weren't looking. You bent our radiator."

"Your radiator bent me, too," said George, and the girl laughed.

I do not think that George had ever made anybody laugh in his life until that moment, and the sensation was pleasing.

"Are you a real nurse?" he asked.

Her eyebrows rose at the impertinence.

"I haven't asked you whether you are a real millionaire," she remarked maliciously.

"Oh, but I am!" he said with considerable warmth. "A hundred thousand in cash, and a hundred thousand in shares, and the shares are at ten pounds. You jolly well reckon that out!"

"If I had thought you were a millionaire," she said coldly, "I should have sent you to a hospital. I hate millionaires!"

George regarded her with stern reproach.

"You are very uncharitable," he said, and relapsed into silence, a deeply injured young man.

It annoyed him still further when, later in the day, she gave him some hint of her own prosperity. She was a nurse because she loved nursing. She was especially blessed with the goods of this world, an orphan, and the Matron of St. Agatha's Nurses.

"Matron!" murmured George derisively. "And I suppose," he said tartly, "that when you're short of a patient, you take out your car and knock one down!"

"You're very rude," she said with great severity.

There was another long and unfriendly silence.

"I say," he said, after a while, "what is wrong with me?"

"You've a broken rib or so, you've fractured the radial bone of your left arm, and, from later symptoms, I should imagine you have a slight concussion." She was reading a book, and she did not look up as she reeled off the calamitous inventory.

"In—deed!"

George was very polite. He tried to remember all the beastly clever things that his worthy family had fired at him on occasion, and failed.

"In—deed!" he repeated, but could think of nothing more cutting. He contented himself by analysing her features, and found an unaccountable pleasure in the discovery that they were faultless. She was twenty-five, he judged. Her eyes were big, grey eyes, and her eyelashes were very dark. Her complexion was perfect, her nose was straight, her mouth and chin were adorable. He gave up intelligent analysis at this point, and fell into vague rhapsodies.

V.

THE directors of the Sanworth Reef Gold Mining Company, Limited, sat in council at their offices at Dashwood House. There was the identical millionaire, with the identical white waistcoat—George would have hailed the rust spot near the second buttonhole as an old friend—who sat at the head of a table, staring out of a window, obligingly opened for the purpose, and there were other millionaires more expensively clad.

One of these was very angry. He had a hot, red face, and a hot, red tie, and an apoplectic carnation in his buttonhole.

The board meeting had been called because George Gregory Sanworth had, of a sudden, disappeared as from the face of the earth, and because George Gregory Sanworth held one hundred thousand shares in the richest gold mining corporation on the East Rand, and because all sorts of things might have happened to him; but it is fair to remark that the personal well-being of the gentleman was of less consequence to the directors than the knowledge that "Fizz"—Frickenburg, Ziemer and Zust, Limited, the financial Colossus—were endeavouring to secure control of the company.

"With due respect, Mr. Chairman," said the red man offensively, "I submit that Mr. What's-his-name—er—Sanworth should never have been lost sight of. We've traced his people; they don't know where he is. We've been to his bankers; they don't know

where he is. We've found his hotel; *they* don't know where he is. It's bad management."

"Very interestin'," said the chairman softly, "most interestin'—one of the most interestin' things I've ever known."

"It comes to this," said the purple man explosively. "Here's a young man with a hundred thousand shares carrying influence, who might easily become control of the company, and he's wandering about loose; and if Frickenburg's get hold of him an' buy him out for a couple of million——"

"Interestin' problem," agreed the man with the white waistcoat—"intensely interestin'. Idea being that if we got hold of him, and persuaded him to hold his shares or sell 'em to the company, the 'Fizz' people wouldn't bother."

There was a little man at the far end of the table—a little man with a bald head, black side-whiskers, heavy, black moustache, and black-rimmed eyeglasses. He had the appearance of being in mourning for a distant relative.

"Why not detectives, Mr. Chairman"—his voice was unexpectedly deep—"why not detectives? A friend of mine in the City told me confidentially that 'Fizz' had got a couple of smart men looking for Sanworth, in addition to employing all his relations. Why not we, or us, as the case may be?"

Eventually it was resolved: "That the board authorise the employment of two private detectives to trace Mr. G. G. Sanworth, and that a sum of one hundred pounds be voted for that purpose."

* * * * *

George was sitting up in a deep, chintz-covered arm-chair, his legs spread luxuriously on a rest. He was whistling a little tune when his nurse came in.

He thought she was unusually pale, and certainly in the grave eyes that surveyed him steadily there was more than a hint of trouble.

She closed the door behind her, and glanced a little apprehensively at the open window.

"Aren't you sitting too—too near the window?" she asked.

He shook his head.

"The desire for a hurried departure has long since disappeared," he said flippantly. "Your increasing civility has made Bloomsbury——"

"This isn't Bloomsbury," she corrected, not without a show of hauteur.

"It is near enough," he said.

"We are Mayfair in the telephone book," she insisted.

"So is Pimlico," he taunted, "and so are bits of Chelsea and bits of Camden Town. Don't pin your faith to the telephone book——"

He might have gone on indefinitely, but something in her face stopped him.

She drew a low chair forward and sat down near him.

"Mr. Sanworth," she said, speaking quickly, "I want to say something to you. When we picked you up, we found in your pocket a great deal of money."

"I have every confidence in your honesty," he said graciously.

"Please don't joke. There was a lot of money, but nothing by which we could identify you. I—we—did not stop to consider who you were—sister Rose and myself. We brought you here because—because we were distressed by the accident, and because we felt that, having been responsible for the mischief, it was——"

"Up to you?" he suggested.

"Up to us," she accepted unsteadily, "to do all that we could to save your life."

She hesitated again and looked at him, and the pain in her eyes deepened as she spoke.

"You have jested about being a millionaire," she said, and her voice was very low, "and I—I nearly believed it . . . But now . . . I know."

She dropped her eyes, and did not see the look of blank astonishment on his face.

"Yes?" he said, when the silence had continued for nearly a minute.

She sat with clasped hands, her face averted.

"Last night—for two nights—this house has been watched—by detectives." She turned a sorrowing face to his and shook her head slowly. "Oh, you poor boy, what have you been doing?"

You will remember that for six weeks nurse and patient had met and talked and half confided one in the other.

"What have I been doing?" He was puzzled. "Let me see. I once——"

"I don't want to know!" She rose hastily with hands extended, as if to hold at arm's length the story of his fall. "But you must go away from here." She was speaking rapidly, wildly almost. "When it is dark, I will drive you from the mews to the railway station; I will take you to Dover and put you on board the steamer. You are well enough to travel."



"He recognised the red hair and the aggressive moustache of his brother."

She left him speechless.

Later in the day he decided to go through with the adventure in the "spirit in which it was meant," to apply the vague formula he himself employed.

When it was dark that night, she came in a sober nurse's uniform, and helped him to dress. Though the evening was decidedly warm, she wrapped him in a huge overcoat and muffled his neck with wrappers; she had also purchased a pair of blue spectacles.

"I shall look an awful guy!" he grumbled.

She bit her lips and said nothing, and George Gregory Sanworth likened himself unto an arrant worm.

The drive to the station, in a brougham with drawn blinds, was an ordeal, for neither spoke.

She had reserved a carriage for him.

"Walk as though you're ill," she whispered fiercely, as he strode along the platform.

Those who watched a tall man, with blue spectacles and muffled to his eyes, walking vigorously one moment and hobbling desperately the next, saw also the nurse, and drew their own conclusions.

"How far are you coming?" he asked, when the train had started.

"To Dover," she said shortly.

"Where am I to go?"

"I have taken your ticket to Paris."

There was a long silence.

"I'm not going."

She turned on him with wide-opened eyes.

"But you must!" she gasped.

"I'll stay and face it," he said doggedly. "I don't know what I've done, but I can't get more than seven years for it, unless," he added thoughtfully, "I am wanted for murder!"

She shrank a little from him, and he wanted very much to kick himself.

The train slowed at Dover Town Station and stopped.

Two men came walking carelessly along the length of the train. They had almost passed the carriage, when one clutched the other's arm and turned back.

George swore under his breath, for he recognised the red hair and the aggressive moustache of his brother, and, since he had discarded his blue glasses and had removed his wrappers, he knew that his brother had recognised him.

"Hello, I say!"

Christopher Sanworth fumbled at the handle of the carriage, and with a bound George was at the window.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

"Came down on the same train—thought I saw you at Charing Cross. I say, you're wanted, old man; everybody's looking for you. Let go that handle, old fellow."

"A slight mistake," said George calmly.

"Oh, rot! You're George Sanworth. I'm——"

"A slight mistake," repeated George. "My name is Higgins, and I've never met you before in my life!"

"Rubbish! Don't be a goat! You're George Sanworth. I say, George, old man"—the train was moving slowly, and Christopher continued a disjointed conversation running alongside—"your company want you. They're in a great state of mind, wondering what became of you—put detectives on to find you. You're a millionaire twice over——"

George unkindly pulled up the window, and turned to meet the amazed and terrified face of the girl.

"Mr. Sanworth," she gasped, "it—it isn't true?"

He nodded.

"You're not——"

He shook his head. In her distress she held her burning cheeks with both hands.

"What have I done?" she said half to herself.

"What have you done?" repeated George sternly. "You have compromised me in the eyes of the family! You have made me deny a loving brother! You have branded me"—his voice shook with emotion—"a criminal, and you have attempted to drive me from my native land! Moreover——"

He paused as the train stopped at the harbour platform.

"There's a train back to London in half an hour," he said practically, "and if there isn't, we will have a special."

He led her along the stone platform in the direction of the town.

It was by special train they returned to London. She was very pale, very silent, and inclined to be annoyed.

"The fact of it is," he said a trifle incoherently, "my family—can't stand 'em. I was looking for a new family when you picked me up, or knocked me down, as the case may be. I want a new family. If I hadn't met you, I should have advertised for one. Will you—will you be a family to me? I know I'm not worthy, and all that sort of thing, but nobody ever is. I hate being in love. I think, if you married me, you might cure me."

He said all the wrong things, but he said them so earnestly, so wildly, that——

* * * * *

In course of time the Sanworth family received an invitation to George's wedding, and, having read it, the Sanworth family frowned. In the bottom left-hand corner was the significant notification—

"No speeches."

MOTHERS OF THE NORTH.

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS,

Author of "Neighbours Unknown," "Kings in Exile," "The House in the Water," "The Backwoodsmen," etc.

IT was in the first full, ardent rush of the Arctic spring.

Thrilling to the heat of the long, long days of unobstructed sun, beneath the southward-facing walls of the glaciers, the thin soil clothing the eternal ice burst into green and flowering life. In the sunward valleys brooks awoke, with a sudden filming of grass along their borders, a sudden passionate unfolding of star-like blooms, white, yellow, and blue. As if summoned from sleep by the impetuous blossoms, eager to be fertilised, came the small northern butterflies in swarms, with little wasp-like flies and beetles innumerable. Along the inaccessible ledges of the cliffs the auks and gulls, in crowded ranks, screamed and quarrelled over their untidy nests, or filled the air with wings as they flocked out over the grey-green, tranquil sea. The world of the north was trying to forget for a little the implacable savagery, the deathly cold and dark, of its winter's torment.

The great, unwieldy, grunting walruses felt it, too, and responded to it—this ardour of the lonely Arctic spring, astray in the wastes. On the ledges of a rocky islet, just off shore, the members of a little herd were sunning themselves. There were two old bulls and four cows with their sprawling lumps of calves. All were in a good humour with each other, lying with heads or fore-flippers flung amicably across each other's grotesque bodies, and grunting, groaning, grumbling in various tones of content as the pungent sunlight tickled their coarse hides. All seemed without a care beneath the sky, except one of the old bulls. He, being on watch, held his great tusked and bewhiskered head high above his wallowing fellows, and kept eyes, ears, and nose alert for the approach of any peril. One of the unshapely, helpless-looking calves, with its mother, lay in a hollow of the rock, perhaps twenty feet back from the water's edge—a snug spot, sheltered from all winds of north and east. The rest of the herd were grouped so close to the water's edge that from time to time a lazy, leaden-green swell would come lipping up and splash them. The cubs had a tendency to flounder away out of reach of these chill douches; but their mothers were very resolute about keeping them close to the water.

Presently the little groups were enlarged by one. Another old bull, who had been foraging at the sea-bottom, grubbing up clams, star-fish, and oysters with his tusks, and crushing them in the massive mill of his grinders, suddenly shot his ferocious-looking head above the surface. For all his gross bulk, in the water he moved with almost the speed and grace of a seal. In a second he was at the rock's edge. Hooking his immense tusks over it, he drew himself up by the force of his mighty neck, flung forward a broad flipper, dragged himself out of the water, and flopped down among his fellows with an explosive grunt of satisfaction.

They were not, it must be confessed, a very attractive company, these uncouth sea-cattle. The adults were from ten to eleven feet in length, round and swollen-looking as hogsheads, quite lacking the adornment of tails, and in colour of dirty yellow-brown. Sparse bristles, scattered over their hides in rusty patches, gave them a disreputable, moth-eaten look. Their short but powerful flippers were ludicrously splayed. They had the upper half of the head small, flat-skulled, and earless; while the lower half, or muzzle, was enormously developed to support the massive, downward-growing tusks, twelve to fifteen inches in length. This grotesque enlargement of the upper jaw was further emphasised by the bristling growth of long stiff whiskers which decorated it, giving the wearer an air of blustering irascibility. As for the calves, their podgy little forms had the same overblown look as those of their parents, but their clean young hides

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were not so wrinkled, nor were they anywhere disfigured by lumps and scars. They were without tusks, of course, but the huge development of their muzzles, in preparation for the sprouting of the tusks, gave them a truculent air that was ludicrously belied by the mildness of their baby eyes. They rolled and snuggled against the mountainous flanks of their mothers, who watched them with vigilant devotion. The calf that lay furthest inland, apart from the rest, was in some pain, and whimpering. That morning it had got a nasty prod in the shoulder from the horn of a passing narwhal, and the anxious mother was trying to comfort it, gathering it clumsily but tenderly against her side and coaxing it to nurse. The rest of the herd, for the moment, was utterly content with life; but the troubled mother was too much engrossed with her little one's complaints to notice how caressing was the spring sun.

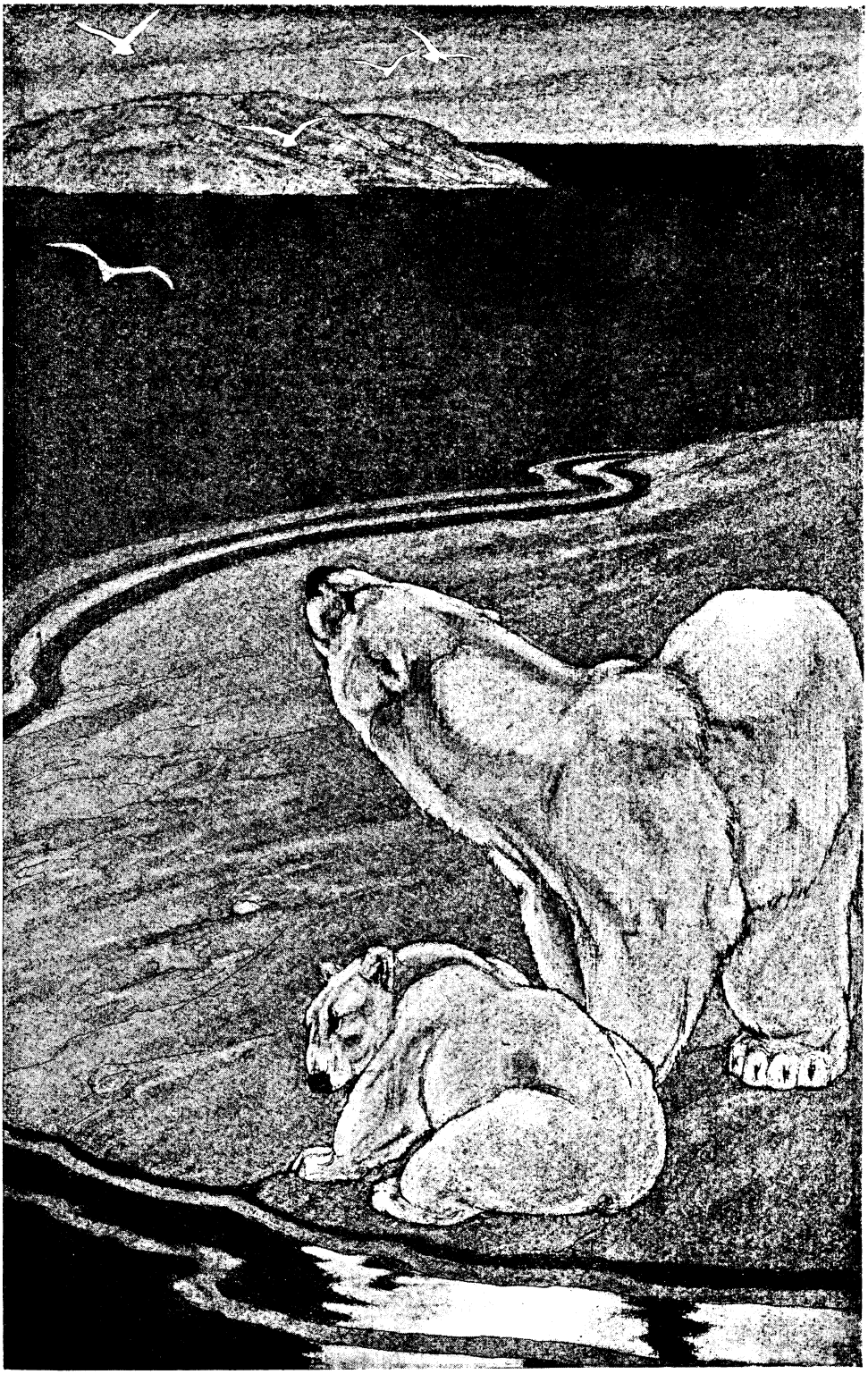
Meanwhile, not far away was another mother who, in spite of the spring, was equally ill-content. Down to the shore of the mainland, behind the island, came prowling a lean white bear with a cub close at her heels. The narrow bay between island and mainland was full of huge ice-cakes swung in by an eddy of the tides. Many of these wave-eaten and muddied floes were piled up on the shore along tide-mark, and as their worn edges softened under the downpour of the sun, they crumbled and fell with small glassy crashes. Hither and thither among them stole the brave mother, hoping to find some dead fish or other edible drift of the sea. She had had bad hunting of late—the shoals of the salmon had been inexplicably delaying their appearance on the coast—and she was feeling the pangs of famine. To be sure, she was filling her stomach, after a fashion, with the young shoots of rushes and other green stuff, but this was not the diet which Nature had framed her for. And in her lack of right nourishment she was pouring her very life itself into her breasts, in the effort to feed her little one. He, too, was suffering, so scanty was the supply of mother's milk. Even now, as the great bear stopped to nose a mass of seaweed, the cub crowded under her flank and began to nurse, whimpering with disappointment at the too thin stream he drew. Her fierce eyes filmed, and she turned her head far round in order to lick him tenderly.

The stranded ice-floes yielded nothing that a bear could eat, and she was ranging on down the shore, disconsolately, when all at once a waft of air drew in from seaward. It came direct from the island, and it brought the scent of walrus. She lifted her long black-edged muzzle and sniffed sharply, then stood as rigid as one of the ice-cakes, and searchingly scrutinised the island. The cub, either imitating his mother or obeying some understood signal, stood moveless also. One of the earliest lessons learned by the youngsters of the wild is to keep still.

There was not a walrus in sight, but the bear's nostrils could not deceive her. She knew the huge sea-beasts were there, on the other side of the island, and she knew they would be very much at ease on such a day as this, basking in the sun. Walruses were not the quarry she would have chosen. The great bulls, courageous and hot-tempered, the powerful cows, dauntless as herself in defence of their young—she knew them for antagonists to be avoided whenever possible. But just now she had no choice. Her cub was not getting food enough. To her there was nothing else in the world so important as that small, troublesome, droll-eyed, hungry cub.

Keeping herself now well out of sight behind the ice-floes, with the cub close at her heels, she stole down to the edge of the retreating tide. The bay was too crowded with slowly-moving floes to be quite as safe for the cub as she would have had it, but she could not leave him behind. She kept him close at her side as she swam. He was a good swimmer, diving fearlessly when she dived, his little black nose cutting the grey-green water bravely and swiftly. In everything he imitated her stealth, her speed, her vigilance, for he knew there was big game in this hunting.

The island was a ridge of some elevation, shelving down by ledges to the sea. The white bear knew better than to climb the ridge and try to steal down upon the walruses. She was well aware that they would be keenly on the watch against any approach from the landward side. From that direction came all they feared. When she arrived at the island, she swam along, close under shelter of the shore, till she reached the extremity. Then, behind the shelter of a stranded floe, she drew herself out, at the same time flattening herself to the rock till she seemed a part of it. Every movement the cub copied assiduously. But when she rose upon her haunches, and laid her narrow head in a cleft of the ice-floe to peer over, he kept himself in the background and watched her with his head cocked anxiously to one side.



"The bear's nostrils could not deceive her."

The walruses were in full view, not fifty yards away. For all the pangs of her hunger, the mother bear never stirred, but remained for long minutes watching them, studying the approaches, while the scent of them came on the light breeze to her nostrils. She saw that the herd itself was inaccessible, being well guarded and close to the water. If she should try to rush them, they would escape at the first alarm; or if she should succeed in catching one of the cubs in the water, she would be overwhelmed in a moment—caught by those mighty tusks, dragged to the bottom, drowned and crushed shapeless. But with gleaming eyes she noted the cow and calf lying further up the slope. Here was her chance—a dangerous one enough, but still a chance. She dropped down at last to all fours, crouched flat, and began worming her way upward among the rocks, making a covert of the smallest hummock or projection. The cub still followed her.

It was miraculous how small the great white beast managed to make herself as she slowly crept up upon her quarry. Her movements were as noiseless as a cat's. They had need to be, indeed, for the hearing of the walrus is keen. There was not a sound upon the air but the heavy breathings and gruntings of the herd, and the occasional light tinkle and crash of crumbling ice.

At a distance of not more than twenty paces from the prey, the old bear stopped and gave a quick backward glance at her cub. Instantly the latter stopped also, and crouched warily behind a rock. Then his mother crept on alone. She knew that he was quite agile enough to avoid the floundering rush of any walrus, but with him she would take no risks.

Suddenly, as if some premonition of peril had smitten her, the mother walrus lifted her head and stared about her anxiously. There was no danger in sight, but she had grown uneasy. She lowered her head against her calf's plump flank, and started to push him down the slope toward the rest of the herd.

Not a dozen feet away, an enormous form, white and terrible, arose as if by magic out of the bare rocks. A bellow of warning came from the vigilant old bull down below. But in the same instant that white mass fell upon the cringing calf, and smashed its neck before it knew what was happening.

With a roar the mother walrus reared herself and launched her huge bulk straight forward upon the enemy. She was swift in her attack—amazingly so—but the white bear was swifter. With astonishing strength and deftness, even in the moment of delivering that fatal blow, she had pushed the body of her prey aside, several feet up the slope. At the same time, bending her long back like a bow, she succeeded in evading the full force of the mother's assault, which otherwise would have pinned her down and crushed her. She caught, however, upon one haunch, a glancing blow from those descending tusks, which came down like pile-drivers, and a long red mark leapt into view upon her white fur. The next moment she had dragged the prey beyond reach of the frantic mother's next plunging charge.

The rocky slope was now in an uproar. The other cows had instantly rolled their startled young into the sea, and were tumbling in after them with terrific splashing. The three bulls, grunting furiously, were floundering in great loose plunges up the slope, eager to get into the fray. The bereaved mother was gasping and snorting with her prodigious efforts, as she hurled herself in huge sprawling lunges after the slayer of her young. So agile was she proving herself, indeed, that the bear had enough to do in keeping out of her reach, while half lifting, half dragging the prize up the incline.

At last the body of the calf caught in a crevice, and the bear had to pause to wrench it free. It was for a moment only, but that moment came very near being her last. She felt rather than saw the impending mass of the cow as it reared itself above her. Like a spring suddenly loosed, she bounded aside, and those two straight tusks came down, just where she had stood, with the force of a ton of bone and muscle behind them.

Wheeling in a flash to follow up her advantage, the desperate cow reared again. But this time she was caught at a disadvantage. Her far more intelligent adversary had slipped around behind her, and now, as she reared, struck her a tremendous buffet on the side of the neck. Caught off her balance, the cow rolled down the slope, turning clean over before she could recover her footing. The three bulls, in the midst of their floundering charge up the hill, checked themselves for a moment to see how she had fared. And in that moment the bear succeeded in dragging her prize up a steep where the walruses could not hope to follow. A few yards more, and she had gained a spacious ledge some twenty feet

above the raging walruses. A second or two later, in answer to her summons, the cub joined her there, scrambling nimbly over the rocks at a safe distance from the foe.

Realising now that the marauder had quite escaped their vengeance, the three bulls at length turned away, and went floundering and snorting back to the sea. The mother, however, inconsolable in her rage and grief, kept rearing herself against the face of the rock, clawing at it impotently with her great flippers, and striking it with her tusks till it seemed as if they must give way beneath the blows. Again and again she fell back, only to renew her futile and pathetic efforts the moment she could recover her breath. And from time to time the old bear, nursing the cub, would glance down upon her with placid unconcern. At last, coming in some sort to her senses, the unhappy cow turned away and crawled heavily, with a slow, jerky motion, down the slope. Slowly, and with a mighty splash, she launched herself into the sea, and swam off to join the rest of the herd a mile out from shore.

THE WINDING WAY.

THE winding way's the way to town,
The way to town, to London Town,
The winding way's the way to town,
And many travel on it.
It wavers up, it wanders down,
It leaves the hedges, green and brown;
The winding way's the way to town
For cap, and hat, and bonnet!

The winding way's the way for bread,
The way for bread, to work for bread,
The winding way's the way for bread,
And many seek and find it.
It steals the gold upon their head,
And gives them locks of snow instead;
The winding way's the way for bread,
And many weep who wind it.

The winding way's the way for fame,
The way for fame, to seek for fame,
The winding way's the way for fame,
And many there are who try it.
And some find meed of sin and shame,
And some find lustre for their name,
But each one finds it end the same—
Where all is still and quiet.

AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON.

FROM "THE PLUME OF FEATHERS."

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

III. A BARGAIN'S A BARGAIN.

THERE was a good bit of gloom cast over Widecombe when Nat Bradley's poor wife at last went home. Because, you see, she took her own life most resolute—quite the last thing that was ever to have been expected from such a peaceful, simple creature; and Nat said that he'd rather she'd have lived on till the Day of Doom than go out of it in such a sad and shocking fashion. Of course, poor bird-witted woman, no blame attached to her. It weren't even "suicide while in a state of insane mind," because her mind was gone years and years afore she did the deed.

We was standing Bradley his liquor on the evening after the funeral, and he was a good bit cheered up by that time, and towards the end of the evening, when mellow, he even named an elderly female or two in confidence to me and Johnny Rowland. But before that our talk had touched not a few fellow-creatures here and there as was known to have took their own lives; and some men—Samuel Bonus and Farmer Jim Mumford among the number—stoutly held to it that no sane human ever yet did away with himself; whereas I—Tom Turtle, as be telling this tale—and Moses Butt, our silent member, and Peter Gurney, the farrier, and Gregory Snow, declared most steadfast that such was not the case. For 'twas common knowledge amongst us how a weak but sane creature once and again had cut his throat to escape the consequences of his own folly, or bad luck, as the case might be. And Peter called home more stories than me, and could show also how the quality do oftenest perform the rash act. In fact, he told the tale of Sir William Hawkford, Knight of the Bath, a learned judge of old time, as found life not worth living, and went out of it very clever by making his servant destroy him in all ignorance of what he did.

This judge had a great park, and in it was game and deer. And Sir William called the keeper to him and charged him with being a slack and lazy man, because the deer was being slain and stolen. So he rated the keeper very stern, and bade him be brisker in his nightly rounds, and have no parley with any poacher he might come upon, but, if such a man couldn't give account of himself, to shoot him at sight.

This the keeper undertook to do on pain of losing his post, and soon enough he was called to keep his word. For there came a dark, wild winter's night, fit for trouble; and there, sure enough, under the light of a flying moon, the servant, on his rounds, discovered a strange figure walking in the park alone. He challenged, but got no answer; then, having warned the poor wretch that his life would pay the forfeit, fired upon him and dropped him in his tracks. The judge's self he slew—a very terrible deed, for certain. 'Twas thus Sir William chose to end his doleful days; and none blamed the keeper, I believe, and why should they? And none could honestly say the judge was mad.

But Bonus and Mumford, even after they'd heard this cunning tale, held that it proved nothing, and Sir William was out of his senses to have lighted on such a plan.

"'Tis the cruel wit of madness," said Bonus. "No man with all his intellects could have done such a clever thing. For he tried to cheat the Recording Angel, and who but a madman ever thought to do that?"

Then we all got arguing on the subject, and the talk ran so deep and wise that a man here and there forgot to drink his liquor. And when Johnny Rowland seed his mugs and tankards standing still, he felt 'twas time to cut in and change the subject.

"Say what you will, souls, 'tis a vile thing, and history shows it," he declared. "Why for did our anticessors bury such rash and wilful creatures at a cross roads with a stake drove through 'em? Why, to show what they thought of it; and whatever the heathen may have done in their ignorance, 'tis quite

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clear us Christians didn't ought to have no truck with the subject. 'Tis a Christian crime to do murder on yourself, and 'tis just as cowardly to want to live longer than you ought as 'tis to want to live shorter. And that puts me in mind of a very funny story; so the sooner you get on with your liquor and light up your pipes again, the better, for 'tis growing late.

With that he told the tale of Toby Brimblecombe, the son of the old white witch as lived to Rundlestone; and, for once in a way, 'twas a story that even I hadn't heard Johnny tell afore. And being a thought quicker at a joke than my neighbours, I led the laughter; for 'tis a very funny tale, without any doubt, though you'd never think so from the beginning of it.

"This here Tobias Brimblecombe was a furze-cutter," began Rowland, "and he done his simple work very well, and crept through his life till he was eight-and-thirty in a very proper way for such a terrible humble sort of man. But then things happened to him, as they will to the least of us, for I believe there's hardly anybody turned of fifty as can honestly say they haven't had one adventure in their lives.

"And Toby's adventure was over a woman. It began well, but turned out badly, as dealings with the women so often do when the men be built of weak stuff. If you be going to them, you must keep a stiff upper lip and a commanding eye and a manly tone in your voice. Let 'em know you'll stand no nonsense from the outset, for if they think you will, then nonsensical they'll be, according to the natural instinct and temper of them, and you'll smart according. Just a pinch of fear goes to a happy marriage; and the fear's got to be on the woman's side, for if 'tis t'other, then you'll get a poor come-along-of-it and food for sneering, or laughter, or pity, according to the spectator's point of view."

"We don't forget you'm a bachelor, Johnny," said Gregory Snow; and then Rowland laughed his jolly laugh and went on.

"Well, Brimblecombe, reaching the ripe age of thirty-eight, dared to lift his eyes to a woman and offered for her against his mother's advice. But for once, being terrible excited at the brave idea of having a female for hisself, Tobias held on and courted her to the best of his poor powers and won her. She was a draggle-tailed, good-natured creature so old as him, and she lived by gathering watercresses and selling them in Tavistock. She lodged along with a widow down to Merivale, and Susan Ellis was her name. If she'd been cleaned and 'rayed in tidy clothes, she might have passed muster very well, but, as it was, her looked more like a mommet to fright the birds from the corn than a woman with hopes and fears, and a joy of life, and an immortal soul. Brown hair and a brown face and a mouth for ever laughing; for 'tis a trick of Providence, that balances all so fair, that them with least to laugh about do often laugh the most. And she accepted Toby Brimblecombe, and he bought her a new gown and made her give up gathering cresses, and insisted that she should keep her face clean.

"They ordained to wed when the man turned forty, and 'twas his idea it should be so, because there was a lot of small caution in his nature, and he judged that if they kept company for two years, they'd get to know about each other's characters and larn a few things better larned afore marriage than after. 'Twas very wise, of course, but when trouble happened, and Toby's plans miscarried, he hadn't sense to see his luck, but cussed hisself something shocking for a thick-headed, short-sighted zany.

"In a word, the woman, Susan Ellis, got work at an inn—on the strength of her fine new gown and clean face, 'twas said. And she turned out a very good worker and a very soft-tongued, pleasant creature. Then her prosperity spoiled her, so far as poor Toby was concerned, and the very last thing as he counted upon began to happen. All was going well with him, and he thought more of Susan and was prouder of her than ever; but, as ill-luck would have it, owing to her increased prosperity and the larger experience of males that her work at the inn gave her, she began to see Toby wasn't the only man in the world, and that, as a matter of harsh fact, he was a very poor pattern of husband in mind, body, and pocket.

"Even that wouldn't have done much harm, I suppose, but then there came along Anthony Westaway, a widower of solid means. He farmed a tenement over to Brownberry, and was a cheerful, solid, and very kind-hearted creature, as loved a joke and better liked to be with laughter-makers than the long-faced sort. I don't say 'twas honest, or fair, or a proper thing to do, but the strong will ride rough-shod over the weak till the end of time, and there be those who'll tell you 'tis a good thing they do; for if the weak had it all their own way, then the strong would be smothered out of

the earth, and no doubt that would be a pity for some reasons. We can't all copy the rabbits and sheep, of course.

"Be that as it may, Anthony, despite his grey whiskers and five-and-fifty years, was thrice the man poor Toby was; and he got Susan away from Toby, and he didn't want to wait two years, nor yet two minutes. So before Toby fairly realised what a shameful and unheard-of and scandalous thing had been done to him, his sweetheart was another man's wife.

"Susan told him all about it, and said she was cruel sorry, and awful ashamed of herself and a lot more like that; but she was firm. She made it quite clear that she liked Tobias well, and was very grateful to him for all he'd done to lift her, and should always remember him with lively good-will; but she found as she liked Anthony a lot better.

"'You can only live your life through once,' said Susan, 'and I feel that I'll suit Mr. Westaway better than I'd suit you in the long run. And I'm sure the woman's born who'll make you a fine, useful wife yet. So I beg you'll seek her, and take no offence where none be intended.'

"'Tis a hard world, and people didn't shed many tears over Toby. The general feeling seemed to be that if he wasn't man enough to keep her, so much the worse for him and the better for the human race. Because the strongest male wins in Nature, and though among the upper people, owing to money, and titles, and outside things like that, the women will marry any knock-kneed, mindless trash for the sake of what goes with him, with us common folk there's no bait on the hook more than Nature puts there, and, as a rule, 'tis the best man wins, because the women ban't dazzled with rubbish, like the pictures and gilt and glass hung outside a peep-show to draw the folk in.

"So Susan wedded the better man, and broke her word and obeyed the call of Nature, and Tobias took on something dreadful, and gave out afore the face of the nation that he meant to do away with himself. Nobody worried much about that, not even his mother; and when I axed the old woman concerning it—'twas the time I went to her about the matter of my potman and his girl—she said that I needn't fear for Tobias.

"'He's all right,' declared Mother Brimblecombe. 'I know Toby better than anybody else, and I know he ban't built to destroy himself any more than he be built to destroy you or me. His heart is soft, and though I grant this matter have hardened it a lot, and made a man of him a'most, yet it won't come to anything. He ban't built to win and keep a woman, and this is the best thing that could have happened, for she was a joyous, full-blooded thing, terrible hungry to get all she could out of life. And Heaven knows what her past was, or her future will be. In fact, as the man's mother, I was very glad when she dropped Toby, and I won't say, between you and me and the teapot, but that I may have had a bit to do with it behind the scenes. Anyway, in justice to Farmer Westaway, I may tell you he called upon me a week before he asked Susan to throw over my son, and I told him to go right on, as the nature in him prompted, and that if the woman said 'Yes,' I should be the last to grumble, or do him any harm for his pains.'

"You see, Westaway, for all his fun and frolic, was a superstitious man, and if Toby's mother had threatened to overlook him and do him evil for taking Toby's girl, such was the belief in Mother Brimblecombe's powers among the older people at that time, that I don't think he'd have gone on.

"So there it stood, and Tobias let it be known high and low that he was going to kill hisself; and he told Susan the same a week after her marriage. In fact, he went all the way to Brownberry so to do; and Farmer Westaway was home at the time, and made the poor chap come in and have his dinner along with them. He wouldn't take no denial, and Toby ate and drank, though he swore that he couldn't let down his food in comfort, and afore he went away he told Susan that it wouldn't make no difference to his plans, and that he was as determined as ever to kill himself, and that the guilt and the ghost would be her portion. She bore up pretty well, and hoped as he'd play the man and think better of it; and then he went home to his mother.

"The very day after, so I heard, a chap come up to see Toby at his work, fuzz-cutting under the Staple Tors, and the man was named Charlie Bates, from the village of Sampford Spiney. Tobias knew him. They were birds of a feather, and, if anything, Bates was simpler and humbler than Brimblecombe himself. A slack-twisted chap, with a poor, little yellow beard you could see through, and silly blue eyes, and a round face like an owl. In fact, as I said the fust time I saw him, you'd have expected to hear the man hoot rather than speak.



"She lived by gathering watercresses and selling them in Tavistock."

"They talked together, and Charlie explained as he'd heard about Toby's great intention, and wanted to know if 'twas true.

"'Yes, 'tis,' said the fuzz-cutter. 'I've been treated something shameful, and I ban't going to suffer it. I'm so good as a dead man, though I stand here talking to you this moment. And when I'm gone, the nation will ring with it, and that Westaway will be disowned by all proper people.'

"'The bravery!' says Bates. 'To think of what a courageous chap you be! And when shall 'e do the rash act, Tobias?'

"'In my own time,' answers the other. 'I won't be accountable to anybody. I'll just go when I please.'

"'Will it be in a fortnight, I wonder?' asks Charles.

"'Maybe it will, and maybe it won't; and why for do you want to know?' answers back the doomed man.

"'Because I'm terrible wishful to get your job,' explains Charlie Bates. 'You see, me and my master, Mr. Maydew, are out, along of me letting a sow and her litter into the lettuce bed by an unfortunate accident. So I be going this day month; and if 'tis your terrible purpose to slay yourself inside that time, your master, Mr. Hannaford, will want a new fuzz-cutter, and that be work I'm very clever at.'

"'Ah, 'tis everybody for hisself in this world, I see!' says Toby, with great bitterness in his voice. 'And so I'll be for myself, too. I haven't gived Hannaford notice yet, for I never thought of a little thing like that, standing, as I do, on the edge of the grave. But there 'tis—nobody does nothing for nothing nowadays. So you'd best tell me what you'll pay me if I tell you the exact date.'

"'Don't you do that, for mercy's sake!' says Charlie, bursting out in a perspiration all over. 'Because, if I knowed that, I'd feel myself, as a good man, called upon to tell the police, and you wouldn't like for me to do so.'

"But Toby laughed.

"'Tell them so much as you please—I laugh at 'em! Why, inspector stopped me in Princetown a week ago, and a crowd came round in a minute, and I was the middle of it, and a marked man! And inspector, he warned me that if I persisted in taking my life, the consequences might be very serious; and I snapped my fingers at the fellow, and told him that I didn't care no more for the consequences than a bird in a tree!'

"Charles considered then, because he didn't think it would have come to a question of cash about Toby's work. But evidently Brimblecombe wanted to get something out of the deal.

"'I suppose your idea is to spend a bit of money and have a final flare up afore you go?' asked Bates; and Tobias, who hadn't thought of any such thing, remembered that 'tis an ill wind that bloweth nobody any good, and saw a way to turn a penny out of his misfortunes.

"'I won't name the day,' he answered, 'because, as you say, that might get on your conscience. I won't name the day to you—any more than that lying baggage, Susan Westaway as she now is, would name the day to me; but this I can do. If you offer me enough money, I'll tell you to within a week when the thing shall be done.'

"Charles thought upon that. He had saved up five pound in the course of ten year or thereabouts, and 'twas in the Post Office Savings Bank, at his mercy to draw out if so he wished. He little liked to part from a penny of it, for they'd told him that 'twas gathering in money at interest, and he'd got a sort of foggy idea 'twould goody into a hundred for him if he lived long enough.

"'I'll give 'e ten bob to know the date within a week, Tobias,' he says; but his friend didn't think 'twas sufficient.

"'Make it twenty, and we'll talk about it,' he answered.

"Charlie tried for fifteen, but the dying man, as he called himself, was firm; and a few days later Bates brought Tobias a sovereign, and Toby told him that he might expect to hear the tragical news just after the August Bank Holiday. So they left it there, and the next thing Brimblecombe got was a message from old Gammer Grimbal at Princetown—a bed-ridden creature, who preserved great faith and patience under her sufferings. She sent for Tobias, and he went, and she earnestly begged him to repent of his intention, but said, if he wasn't going to repent, that he might do her a service. And he asked her what 'twas, and she told him she much wanted a message took to her soldier son—him as fell into the sea and was drowned under very painful circumstances at Plymouth ten year afore.

"'You'll be going to the same place as him, Toby,' said poor Mrs. Grimbal, 'and there you and the likes of you will have to work out your salvation with fear and trembling; and for my dear son's sake I'd much wish you to carry a message to him,

to cheer him and lift his thoughts to the love of the watching Lord, Who forgets none, saint and sinner alike. I want you to take him glad tidings of hope from his old mother; and if you consent to do it, I'll give you two sovereigns that you can leave to your friends in your will.'

"A queer sort of offer, and it shows how a good mother never forgets her childer, and stretches out her hand to them and her heart likewise, even though they may be sadly gone before into the darkness of doubt, and took off at a time when they was but little ready to answer to their Maker for the precious gift of life.

"Toby felt terrible pleased, and promised to carry the mother's words, and took her money. He didn't make a will, however, because he very well knowed there would be nothing to leave under it; but he made away with the two pounds, and he made away with Charlie's one, and he let hisself go pretty reckless, and spent the cash on liquor and got into bad company, all within a fortnight of time. In fact, Mr. Hannaford very near saved him the trouble of giving notice, for he was much tempted to sack the man owing to his riotous living. But he was a just creature, and gave his servant another chance. So August Bank Holiday came and went, and there was Tobias more alive than ever he'd been afore, you might say, while in secret both Bates and Gammer Grimbal began to tremble for their money.

"Half-way through August, Charlie reckoned 'twas about time to make inquiries. His work was running short with Farmer Maydew, and he began to feel most strongly that Tobias ought to go, or else give back the cash he'd had. And about the same time Gammer Grimbal sent a message to Brimblecombe that she'd very much like to have a bit of a talk with him at his convenience. You see, poor thing, she was cut in half between the thought of getting a straight message to her dead boy and the sad idea of how 'twould have to reach him. And though honestly glad that Tobias had changed his mind and meant, as she hoped, to justify his existence afore it ended in a natural manner, yet she felt, if he did that, in common justice her two pound did ought to be returned.

"However, she had to whistle for it, because his trouble had made Brimblecombe a hard-hearted and lawless sort of fool, as happens with some natures. Trouble sweetens the better sort, but it only sours the worst, and from being a mere harmless nobody, his wrongs had turned Tobias into a reckless toad, with the sense of ill-treatment so strong in him that it led to his ill-treatment of other people. He'd been hit heavy, and he didn't care a button who 'twas he hit back, even though it might be an old bed-ridden woman. Such was his fall. So he didn't pay no heed to Mrs. Grimbal's message, and never went near her, and still carried on in a very rash sort of way. But he couldn't escape from Bates. In fact, Charlie was at him morning, noon, and night. He catched Tobias one evening coming back from work, and, being angered by now for his money, talked straight about it. Indeed, they had some pretty fiery words on the subject.

"'I'm tired of this,' says Charlie. 'Here's September in sight a'most, and nothing done. A bargain's a bargain, Tobias Brimblecombe, and if you ban't going to give Mr. Hannaford notice, then you can give me back my money, and the sooner you do, the better pleased I shall be about it.'

"'You ought to blush for yourself,' answered Toby, 'a cruel, heartless devil that you are! You'd hound me out of the world and dance on my grave, no doubt! 'Tis shameful to think that a human being can desire another's death like you want mine. And you call yourself a Christian man!'

"'Not at all—not at all,' replied t'other. 'All I say is, a bargain's a bargain, and I'm sick of your dishonest ways. Every time I meet you and ax you when 'tis to be, you make some paltry excuse.'

"'You'd hurry me out of life,' cried Brimblecombe again, 'and such as you ought to be put away yourselves! 'Tis a sin and a scandal to do it, and me with an old mother and everything! But you needn't fear, Charles; I'm going in my good time. I don't want to live; 'tis only for the sake of others that I hang on. I shall be off presently—afore pheasant shooting begins, without a doubt.'

"'A bargain's a bargain,' whined Charlie again. 'You said 'twas to be after August Bank Holiday when I gave you my money, and now 'tisn't to be carried out till October. You'm a very unsporting sort of man, and what becomes of me in the meantime? Here be I out of work on September the third, and ready for your job. 'Twas a clear understanding, surely? You got my money under false pretences, Tobias, and that puts you in reach of the law; and if you don't give it back, I'll tell a policeman about you—see if I don't!'

"They wrangled a bit more, and Toby said that a policeman was very small potatoes in the eye of a man who would be standing afore the Recording Angel afore pheasant shooting. Then he asked Charlie for another ten bob to hurry him up; and Charles properly lost his temper at that, and said as Brimblecombe was adding insult to injury, and must take him for a born fool—which, of course, was what Tobias and everybody else did do.

"However, he wouldn't drop no more money, and the men parted, to meet again under very strange circumstances a fortnight later, when the end of the tale came to be told.

During that time Toby cast good behaviour away altogether, and let himself go to the dogs, and disgraced himself to Tavistock Market, and got the sack for good and all. Hannaford warned him against his evil ways, gave him his money, and bade him begone. So there he was, and he thought to make capital out of it with Bates, and went straight off to Sampford Spiney, where Bates lived to, and asked for the man. The first of September, it chanced to be, and he heard that Charlie was out on the Moor, along with his master, snipe shooting. He walked out according, because he thought to have a tell with Charles behind his master's back; but then, in the dimpsy of the evening, who should he see but Bates coming back through Walla Valley by himself? Charles carried a game bag and a gun, and he explained that Mr. Maydew had met a friend and was going home another way.

"'Tis my last day with him,' said Bates, 'and to-morrow I be loose on the world, and all your fault.'

"'Pitch upon this stone,' answers Toby, 'and we'll have a tell. A proper gun, sure enough.'

"He fingered Mr. Maydew's fowling-piece a minute. Then a wicked thought come in his head, and he acted according.

"'Tis all over, Charles,' he began. 'My thread's spun, and I shall be a dead man out of mind afore you go to church next Sunday. I'm going to give the man Hannaford notice to-night, and if you travel up over to-morrow forenoon, I've no doubt he'll be very glad for to see you and take you on at my money.'

"Bates could hardly believe his ears or his luck at that, and he got very excited and friendly about it.

"'I always knowed you was a man of your word, and straight, and to be relied upon,' he said. 'When a chap here and there laughed, and told me I'd done a foolish thing, I held out that you'd keep your word, and that I was safe to trust you.'

"'Certainly, certainly,' answers Toby. 'It's all over, and the better the day, the better the deed, as they say. You'll be in good work again afore you know it, and Hannaford can be trusted. I've thought it all out very careful, and I've weighed drowning against hanging, and poison against shooting. 'Tis to be shooting, Charles. I was going to borrow old "Moleskin's" gun to-morrow, but you've saved me the trouble, because this one in my hand will do very well. 'Tis loaded, I see.'

"Well, there's no doubt Bates felt fearful then, but he didn't feel so fearful as you might think. He knowed what a slippery customer Brimblecombe was got to be, and it come to him very forcible that he'd better strike while the iron was hot, and not strain his conscience to breaking at such a moment. 'A bargain's a bargain,' he kept saying to himself; and that supported him through the ordeal.

"'If you will, you will, Tobias,' he answered; 'but I hope you don't think none the worse of me, or blame me in the matter.'

"'Not at all,' declared Toby. 'Why should I? You can't prevent what I'm going to do. Nothing can—'tis all over bar shouting. And if you wouldn't let me have this gun, I should only go to "Moleskin," the poacher, and borrow his. So what you have got to say is this: You meet me and have a tell, and I admire this here fowler's gun, and say 'tis the best I've ever seen. Then I say I'd dearly like to pull trigger, and you forbid it. But, as the stronger man, I override you, and tell you to bide where you be while I go up over the river through yonder bottom and try for a rabbit. You can't stop me, and I go. Then you hear the gun fire, after waiting twenty minutes or thereabout, and then you expect me to come back again. You sit on very patient till the darkness comes down, but then you get uneasy and set off to seek me. And then you find my mortal dust all scat to atoms—a terrible gashly sight—and then you run home for dear life and blaze it abroad, so as all the people shall hear I be gone at last!'

"Charles shook in his shoon at that. 'I shall never have the courage to do it,' he said. But Toby laughed at him. 'You silly mumphead,' he answered, 'what courage do you need to give the alarm about it? Why, if you be frighted to see a dead corpse,

you needn't come across the river at all. You can just wait till you hear the shot, then you'll know I be gone, and you can run off and say you've seen me a dead 'un. Under yonder tree—the tall one with they hollies next to it—you'll find me stretched out. And now I'll wish you good-bye. And if you mean well to me, Charles, you can go up over to-night and break it to my poor dear mother.'

"Bates was much relieved that he needn't see Toby's carcass, and he promised faithful that he'd let Mother Brimblecombe know that very night, so soon as ever her son was gone.

"So Tobias shook Charles's hand and went off, and the other was thrown into a terrible state of fear and distress. But he let the man go to his doom, and presently he sat humped up on a stone by the water, listening, half in hope and half in fear, for the fatal sound. At last it came with a bang, and Bates felt as if the shot had gone through his own head. And then he felt as if he was a murderer and had slain t'other with his own hand. 'Twas some minutes afore he could move, for the sound of gunfire had glued his limbs to the rock on which he squatted; but at last he wrenched himself up and rushed away to Sampford Spiney, and cried out the fatal news how Toby Brimblecombe had fallen in with him and borrowed Mr. Maydew's gun to shoot a rabbit, and turned it on himself and done the fearful deed he'd threatened.

"'Where be my gun, anyway?' asks Farmer Maydew, when he come to hear of it, for that was all that interested him.

"And Charles he says: 'The gun be fallen alongside the carpse, and I didn't dare to touch 'un for fear of breaking the law.'

"You'll guess the sequel, I dare say. The gun was worth thirty-five pound, and Tobias he got twenty-five by it. They traced him to Plymouth, and found the gunsmith that bought the gun. But no more was seen of Brimblecombe, and though the people believed his mother knew all about him, she never would allow it, and vowed most steadfast that she did not.

"'Tis a curious story of how trouble found the fighting power in a harmless man and made him show himself. Unfortunately, what he had to show weren't much good to the community, and it would have been far better if trouble had never over-got the chap and led him into bad courses. But I dare say he's reformed long ago, if still alive, and making up by goodness for his naughty deeds. Us'll hope so."

SNOWDROPS.

THEIR gowns are silv'ry samite, their hoods are Lincoln green,
They lift fair faces upward to skies all cold blue sheen;
They stand alone, affrighted, where winter winds yet blow,
And minstrel robin calls them princesses of the snow.

The storm-thrush flutes them welcome dim woodland ways adown,
The dew for each weaves softly a little jewelled crown;
The wind forgets its wailing, and learns new songs to sing,
And sunbeams lean to kiss them, and dream that winter's spring.

AUGUSTA HANCOCK.



"THE CORONATION OF HENRY IV., 1399."

From a manuscript version of Froissart's Chronicle in the British Museum.

ENGLAND'S STORY IN PORTRAIT AND PICTURE.

XV. THE REIGN OF HENRY IV.

"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown,"

SAYS the first English monarch of the House of Lancaster, in Shakespeare's long two-part play upon the story of his troubled reign of but thirteen years' duration, and there were various reasons, inseparable from the circumstances of his accession to the throne, which may well have inspired such a lamentation. Henry's first Parliament consisted of the same members who had elected him king in place of the deposed Richard II., and was therefore entirely accommodating to its new monarch. But the weakness of his claim to the throne—the Earl of March, as descendant from a son of Edward III., who was the elder brother of Henry's father, having a better title according to any law of hereditary succession—kept him dependent upon the good will of Parliament, which had remedied any such flaws in his title by the form of election which followed the deposition of Richard. And succeeding Parliaments of Henry's reign made use of their ascendancy to limit the king's prerogative at many points at which his predecessors on the throne had been sole autocrats.

But before these constitutional changes had evolved from the new relations of king and subjects, Henry was swiftly overtaken by the alarums and excursions of disaffected nobles, insurgent Scots, and rebellious Welsh, in league with insubordinate English barons, until he must frequently have used words equivalent, at least, to those which Shakespeare puts into his mouth—

> So shaken as we are, so wan with care,
> Find we a time for frighted peace to pant,
> And breathe short-winded accents of new broils.

First came the conspiracy among the remainder of loyal adherents to the cause

of the imprisoned Richard II.—a plot contrived chiefly by five of the "lords appellants" of Richard's reign, who had been severely punished by Henry's first Parliament for having "appealed" of treason the late Duke of Gloucester and his party for their coercion of Richard's government.

The conspiracy was betrayed to the king, who left Windsor for London just before the castle was surrounded by five hundred horse soldiers for the purpose of taking him prisoner. Having failed in this object, and learning that writs were out for their arrest as traitors, and that Henry was raising troops with which to meet them, the conspirators retreated westward. The Earls of Kent and Salisbury were taken and beheaded at Cirencester, Lumley and Despenser were executed at Bristol, Huntingdon at Plashy, Blount, Shelley, and eighteen others at Oxford, while other leading spirits of the movement met a similar fate in London. Then followed the announcement of Richard's death in prison, and the public display of his body in London;



HENRY IV., KING OF ENGLAND 1399–1413.

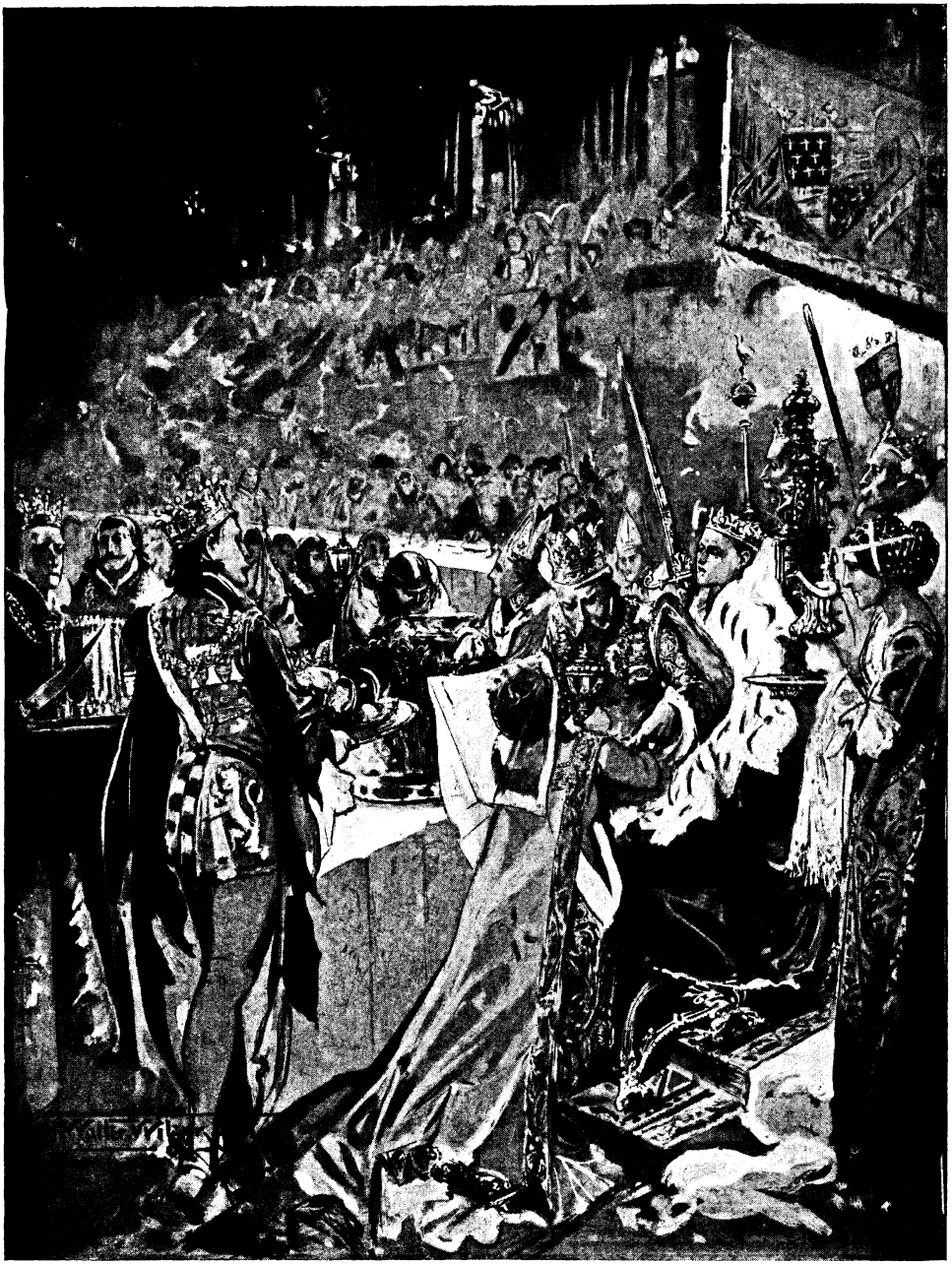
but even after that Henry's position was still embarrassed by rumours that Richard really survived, and had escaped to Scotland, the corpse displayed in London being alleged to have been that of a man who bore a close resemblance to him in feature.

It is easy to understand the origin of such reports, for Henry was by this time committed to a military expedition into Scotland, inspired partly by the turbulent state of the country itself, and partly, perhaps, by the wish to show himself a soldier, for one of the deposition charges against Richard had been his abandonment of the military ambitions of his predecessors on the throne. It was, therefore, to the interest of Scotland to foster a report which could detach from Henry those who still cherished any loyalty to Richard's memory, but there is no evidence that the story had any foundation in fact.

For the purposes of his invasion of Scotland, Henry summoned all nobles, knights, and commoners possessed of fees, wages, or annuities granted by Edward III., the Black Prince, Richard II., or the Duke of Lancaster, to assemble at York, under the penalty of forfeiture of their privileges, according to the ancient feudal custom. At the same time he commanded King Robert and the great barons of Scotland to appear before him at Edinburgh and do homage, the



JOANNA OF NAVARRE, SECOND WIFE OF HENRY IV.



"THE CORONATION BANQUET OF HENRY IV., 1399." BY T. WALTER WILSON.

king for his crown, the barons for their fiefs. King and barons alike refused to obey this order, and Henry advanced upon Edinburgh, which was held by the Duke of Rothsay. An army commanded by the Duke of Albany was ready to take the field against the English force, but avoided an open engagement so long that lack of provisions at last obliged the English King to withdraw from his arrogant but ineffective enterprise, and return home. To Henry's credit, however, must be recorded the absence of the usual horrors of war in Scotland. To quote from Lingard: "From humanity, or policy, he

laboured to mitigate the horrors of invasion. His protection was instantly afforded to all who asked it, and the royal banner displayed from the steeple of a church, or the turret of a castle, secured the village and its inhabitants from the violence and rapacity of the soldiers."

It is probable that the English King's inglorious withdrawal from Scotland was hastened not only by the lack of supplies for his troops, but by the news of a serious rebellion in Wales, where a popular leader of notable abilities had arisen in the person of Owen Glendower. Claiming descent from the ancient royal family of the Welsh, he led an insurgent force into English territory in 1401, and defied Henry's sentence of outlawry passed upon him.

The king himself led three expeditions against the insurgents within the ensuing two years, but each time the Welsh baffled attack by taking to the mountains. Yet in several intervening engagements they defeated more than one force which had been sent against them; but eventually a truce was arranged, from which only Glendower himself and two other Welshmen, Owen Tudor and Rhys Tudor, were excepted.

Meantime, in 1402, the Scots had invaded the northern counties, and harried the country far and wide, but were defeated at Nesbit Moor, with heavy loss. To avenge this disaster, another army, ten thousand strong, marched across the Border, but only to incur a signal defeat at Homildon Hill, where it was engaged in battle by the Earl of Northumberland and his son, Henry Percy, better known as "Hotspur." The Earls of Douglas, Moray, Angus, Fife, and various other great Scottish nobles were taken prisoners, together with eighty French and Scottish knights and many representatives of the great houses of Scotland, including Murdac Stewart, the son of the Duke of Albany.



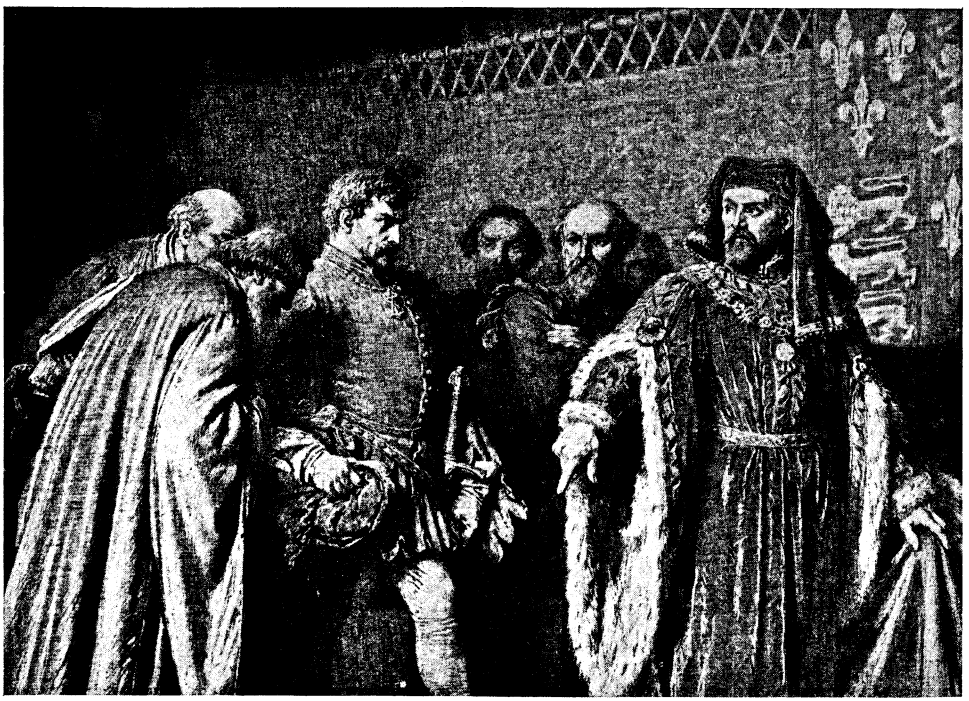
"THE BATTLE OF HOMILDON HILL, 1402." BY J. GRAHAM.

This success of the powerful Percies in the north seems to have strengthened their hand against the king, to whom they now found themselves in opposition, brought about by the Welsh troubles. In one of the engagements fought by the redoubtable Glendower, Lord Grey of Ruthven and Sir Edmund Mortimer had been taken prisoners by the Welsh. Grey was soon afterwards admitted to ransom by Glendower, with the approval of King Henry, but the same

course was forbidden to the family of Mortimer, who was the uncle and guardian of the young Earl of March, the rightful successor of Richard II. in point of heredity. And the sister of this captive Mortimer was the wife of Henry Percy, and so daughter-in-law to the great Earl of Northumberland. The Percies appealed to the king, but he persisted in refusing to allow Mortimer to be ransomed, and the bond between this powerful family, which had helped to put Henry on the throne, became strained to snapping point. As Lingard puts it: "The and then only by small and tardy instalments.

"The Percies expected a reward for their services at the battle of Homildon Hill. Henry gave to them what, in such circumstances, was not worth their acceptance—the Scottish estates of the Earl of Douglas, to be held by them in fee of the English crown."

Thus, in 1403, was formed a strong conspiracy between the Percies and Scrope, Archbishop of York, who advised them to renounce their allegiance to Henry, and proclaim as their party cry the purpose of



"HENRY IV. COMMANDING HOTSPUR TO SEND TO HIM THE PRISONERS OF HIS VICTORY AT HOMILDON HILL, WITHOUT BARGAINING FOR THE RANSOM OF EDMUND MORTIMER." BY EDUARD GRÜTZNER.

KING HENRY: Send me your prisoners with the speediest means.

From an illustration of Scene III., Act I., of Shakespeare's "Henry IV., Part I." Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Cassell & Co., owners of the copyright.

friendship between the king and that powerful family had long been on the wane. The Percies believed that he owed his crown to the aid which they had administered to him in his distress. Henry had not forgotten that they would, if they had dared, have opposed his succession to the throne.

"The Percies were incessantly calling for large sums of money, due to them for the custody of the marches and the expenses of the Scottish war. Henry, whether he were unable or unwilling, paid them but seldom, releasing Richard II., if he still survived, or, if he were really dead, that of placing the Earl of March on the throne in Henry's stead. Other leading spirits of the confederacy were Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester, Douglas, whom the Percies had released without ransom, and Owen Glendower, with whom they formed a close alliance, as part of which he released Edmund Mortimer, gave him his daughter in marriage, and undertook to bring twelve thousand Welshmen to reinforce the confederates.

Under pretext of a battle with the chivalry of Scotland, to be fought on August 1, 1403, the confederates marched their troops northward, and the king was expected to join them, ostensibly for the same purpose. But Henry obtained news that alarmed him when he reached Burton-on-Trent, and hastily threw himself and his forces into Shrewsbury. There he received the defiance of the conspirators, which may still be read in the Harleian MSS. Henry accepted the challenge, after vainly attempting compromise, and on July 14, 1403, was fought the battle of Shrewsbury, of which the issue hung obstinately in the balance between the two nearly equal forces until the fall of Hotspur, pierced to the brain by an arrow, turned the scale in favour of the king's troops, and in the rout that followed, most of the chief confederates were taken prisoners and immediately executed. The Earl of Northumberland, who was not present at the engagement, subsequently surrendered to the king's mercy, and was tried by Parliament and condemned to a fine, which was remitted on his swearing allegiance to Henry and his sons.

The king's victory at Shrewsbury did not, however, secure to him any lasting ease, for in the very next year an attempt was made by one Serle, who had been a gentleman in the suite of Richard II., to persuade the people that that ill-fated king was still alive, and a pseudo Richard was found in the person of Ward, the court fool. The fraud was unsuccessful, and various persons who had taken part in it were put to death, among them Serle himself, who was executed in London after making a full confession of his imposture.

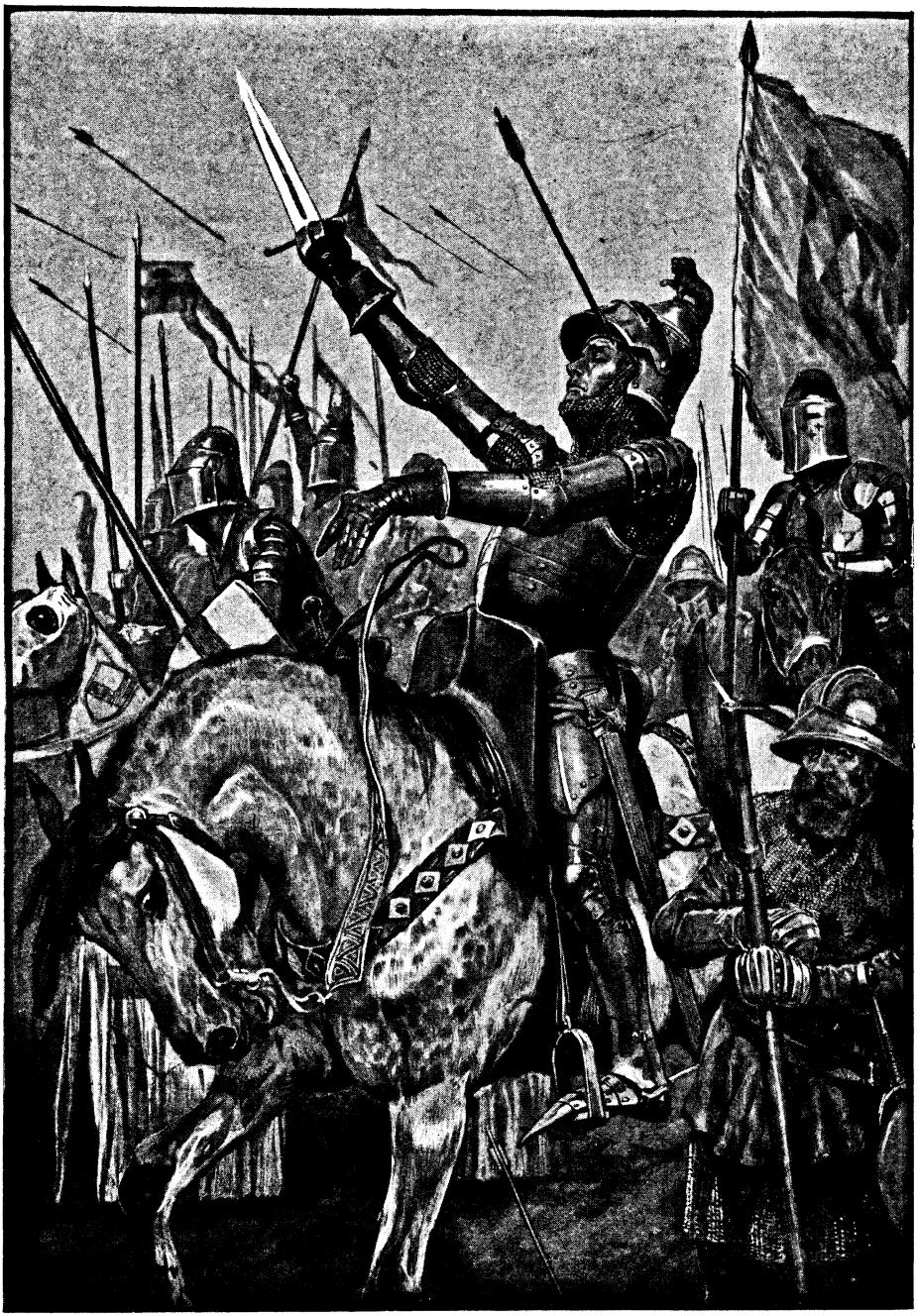
A year later another rebellion was organised by Archbishop Scrope, with whom were the Earl of Northumberland and Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, the son of Henry's old enemy, the late Duke of Norfolk, who had been banished for ever by Richard II. at the lists of Coventry. A manifesto was issued, charging King Henry with various heavy crimes, such as perjury, rebellion, and murder. Upwards of eight thousand men assembled,



"HOTSPUR CONFERRING WITH MORTIMER, OWEN GLENDOWER, AND WORCESTER, AS TO DIVISION OF THEIR TERRITORY IN WALES." BY EDUARD GRÜTZNER.

HOTSPUR: See how this river comes me cranking in, and cuts me from the best of all my land.

From an illustration of Scene I., Act III., of Shakespeare's "Henry IV., Part I." Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Cassell & Co., owners of the copyright.



"HOTSPUR'S DEATH AT SHREWSBURY, 1403." BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.

under the leadership of the archbishop and Mowbray, at Skipton-le-Moor. There they were met by Prince John, the king's third son, and the Earl of Westmoreland, and a conference took place between the leaders of the two sides.

Either by trickery or by force, both Mowbray and the archbishop were led into the camp of the royal forces, and their own followers thereupon retreated and dispersed. The captive leaders were taken before Henry at Pontefract, and were at once beheaded.

Scrope thus became the first bishop to be executed in England by a civil tribunal.

Northumberland, meantime, had turned northward to seek help from Scotland. Henry marched swiftly after him, seizing all his castles and estates as he went, and Northumberland remained an exile for the next two years, seeking to raise aid from Scots and Welsh alternately; but Scotland was not at the moment in a strong enough position to take the offensive against the English King, and a truce was being maintained. The aged King Robert lived in seclusion in the Isle of Bute, and the Duke of Albany acted as regent. Robert's eldest son had fallen into Albany's hands, and was starved to death in Falkland Castle. To save his second son, James, from a like fate, Robert sent him to France, confiding him to the protection of the French King. The prince's vessel was captured by an English cruiser. The prince was taken to London, and there he was detained as a State prisoner, not only for the rest of Henry's own reign, but throughout the whole of that of Henry V., and on into the third year of that of Henry VI., despite the periods of truce between England and Scotland that intervened. The young prince was, however, honourably treated and well educated, and during his captivity composed his poems known as "The King's Quhair," and also fell in love with Lady Jane Beaufort, to whom he was eventually married.

Nor was the insurgent party in Wales any longer in a position to league strongly with the fugitive Northumberland, for a plot for liberating the young Earl of March and his brother, in order to set up the former in Wales as hereditary heir to the crown, was unsuccessful, the young princes being recaptured by Henry after they had been liberated by a stratagem carried out by Lady Despenser. Soon afterwards Prince Hal defeated and took prisoner the son of Owen Glendower, whose star was now waning.



"HENRY IV. COMMITTING PRINCE JAMES OF SCOTLAND TO THE CARE OF HIS TUTORS, 1405."

From an old engraving.

French troops to the number of some twelve thousand came to the Welsh "magician's" aid, and occupied Caermarthen; but finding neither plunder nor even food sufficient for their maintenance in the war-ridden country, they presently sailed away. The young Prince Henry, well supported by successive reinforcements from his father, gained gradually but persistently upon the disaffected area, although some three years were still to elapse before the ascendancy of Glendower was finally destroyed, and he himself reduced to the life of a mere refugee on Snowdon, "lagging superfluous" amid the scenes of his triumphs until some time into the reign of Henry V.

Meantime, in 1408, yet one more rebellion in the north was stirred up by the stubborn Earl of Northumberland, in league with Lord Bardolf and certain would-be avengers of the death of Archbishop Scrope. But the king's persistent good fortune again stood by him, and the rebels were defeated with heavy loss at Bramham Moor, the long feud cherished by the powerful house of Percy being ended by the death of Northumberland in that battle.

This was the last serious attempt to overthrow Henry's rule, but freedom from civil war was not in itself to suffice either to prolong his reign or greatly to illumine its last four years. Naturally of a reserved and austere disposition, lacking in religious feeling, although almost morbidly superstitious, Henry was essentially a man whose best qualities showed in him in early manhood, for he was highly courageous and an expert in the elaborate code of chivalry of his period. But the unceasing fight for the maintenance of his authority over the very subjects who had helped him to the throne rendered him cynical and morose, and his physical strength began to fail him, under the ceaseless strain of his life, long before his death at the early age of forty-six.

Courageous in soldiership, and fiercely revengeful on his enemies—more nobles were executed in his reign than under any of his predecessors, and the cruel persecution of the Lollards began with his consent—Henry was yet throughout his reign actually timid in his relations with his Parliament, conscious, no doubt, of the flaws in his claim to the throne, and invariably anxious to conciliate his electors. Hence resulted a great increase in the powers of Parliament. Five years after Henry's accession, Parliament attempted to resume all royal grants, the proceeds to go towards the reducing of taxation, and the House of Commons subsequently established its right to specify the purposes to which the supplies voted by both Houses should be allotted. In 1407 the royal prerogative was further curtailed by Henry's consent to a number of "articles," of which the chief ordained a permanent council of fifteen members for his guidance. Wishing, likewise, to conciliate the Church, Henry sanctioned the statute for the burning of heretics, under which began the long series



"EXECUTION OF LOLLARDS PROSCRIBED BY PARLIAMENT IN 1406."
From an old engraving.

of cruel persecutions of the Lollards and their successors in the work of reformation.

Constantly engaged as Henry was in the suppression of turbulent struggles within his own kingdom for the overthrow of his usurped authority, he was fortunate in the fact that the long-standing feud between his predecessors and the French remained in abeyance throughout the greater part of his reign. The King of France, as we saw in our preceding article, planned a punitive attack on England to avenge the deposition and imprisonment of his son-in-law, unpaid towards the agreed ransom of King John after the battle of Poictiers. Charles rejoined that England had never complied with the provisions of the subsequent treaty of Bretigny. Thus was opened a new field of endless litigation, from which Charles at length withdrew; but, instead of surrendering his claim, he transferred it to his daughter on her marriage with his nephew Charles, Count of Angoulême, to whom he gave the three hundred thousand crowns of the child-queen's dowry which had not yet been sent to England to com-



"PRINCE HENRY, AFTERWARDS HENRY V., WITH SHAKESPEARE'S 'SIR JOHN FALSTAFF' AND HIS TAVERN ASSOCIATES." BY EDUARD GRÜTZNER.

FALSTAFF (impersonating the King): Harry, I do not only marvel where thou spendest thy time, but also how thou art accompanied.

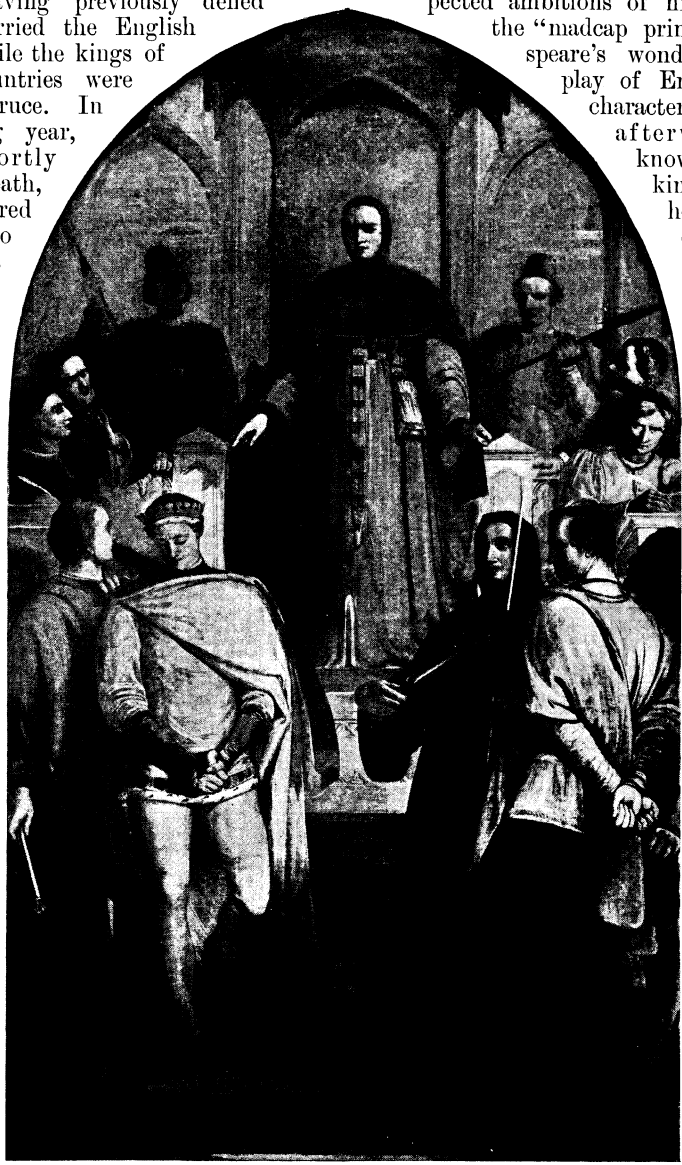
From an illustration of Scene IV., Act II., of Shakespeare's "Henry IV., Part I." Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Cassell & Co., owners of the copyright.

Richard II., but on being satisfied that the unhappy king was dead, contented himself with the restoration of his daughter, Richard's youthful widow. That he accepted the fact of Richard's death is the best evidence we have for disbelieving the subsequent rumours that the dethroned king still survived. His demand for the repayment of Isabella's dowry was baffled by Henry's counter-claim for one million five thousand crowns still plete the total of eight hundred thousand originally agreed. Thereafter French antipathies to England were forgotten awhile in the civil strife between the rival parties of Burgundy and Orleans, and the intermittent insanity of King Charles proved a further cause of avoidance of foreign complications.

A year before his death, however, Henry, who had at last established peace within his own domains, and probably bore in mind how

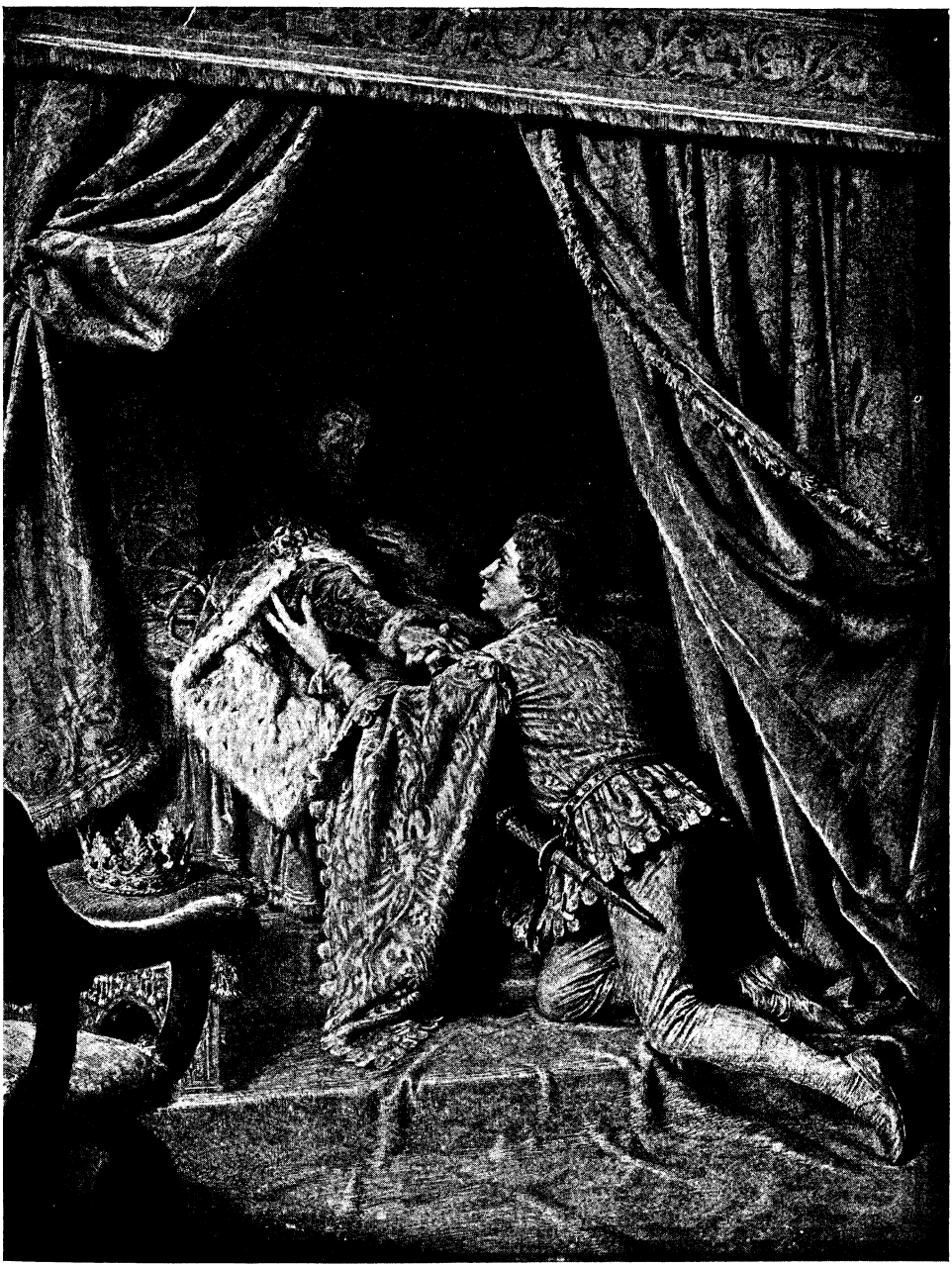
the military inactivity of his predecessor had contributed to his undoing, began to interest himself in the party strife which convulsed France, and sent a strong force to the assistance of the Duke of Burgundy, the Orleanists having previously defied him and harried the English coast even while the kings of the two countries were formally at truce. In the following year, however, shortly before his death, Henry transferred his support to the Orleans faction, but when the two parties soon afterwards arranged a truce, England had gained nothing by her interference. All hope of regaining influence in French affairs was thus postponed into the reign of Henry V., to whom his dying father bequeathed the ideal of French conquest, not for the sake of glory only, but as a means towards keeping well in hand, and well occupied, the restless nobles who had made his own brief reign a burden to him.

Domestic troubles embittered the last years of the strenuous and unscrupulous Henry. His hard-won success had been purchased with an amount of bloodshed and strife unusual even in those turbulent times. He lived to see the very men by whose help he had attained the crown ranged against him as implacable enemies. According to certain stories, his last years were further troubled by the riotous conduct and suspected ambitions of his popular son, the "madcap prince" of Shakespeare's wonderful two-part play of English life and character, "Henry IV.," afterwards to be known as a pattern king and national hero. We reproduce in this article three pictures representing incidents of this period of the young prince's career — one including Shakespeare's great comic character of Falstaff, whose alleged identity with a real character of the period, Sir John Oldcastle, is expressly denied in the epilogue to the second part of the poet's "Henry IV."



"HENRY, PRINCE OF WALES, AFTERWARDS HENRY V., SENTENCED TO IMPRISONMENT BY JUDGE GASCOIGNE." BY C. W. COPE, R.A.

The second episode is that in which, according to the traditional story, Prince Hal submitted to Judge Gascoigne's sentence of imprisonment, recognising its justice, for his act of striking the judge, who had inflicted punishment on one of the prince's riotous companions. The third picture shows the future king assuring his father that he was far from wishing to



"HENRY, PRINCE OF WALES, AFTERWARDS HENRY V., PROTESTING TO HIS DYING FATHER, HENRY IV., HIS INNOCENCE OF PREMATURE AMBITIONS FOR THE CROWN." BY EDUARD GRÜTZNER.

From a picture of Scene V., Act. IV., of Shakespeare's "Henry IV., Part II.," reproduced by permission of Messrs. Cassell & Co., owners of the copyright.

supersede him in authority, as the king assumed from his boyish act of trying the crown on his own head by the bedside of his dying father, whose unconscious state he had mistaken for death itself. Remorsefully the young man cries, in Shakespeare's words—

> O, pardon me, my liege! but for my tears,
> The moist impediments unto my speech,
> I had forestall'd this dear and deep rebuke,
> Ere you with grief had spoke, and I had heard
> The course of it so far.

There are not many recorded facts to substantiate the traditional story of Prince Henry's riotous conduct, but of collision between his views and those of his father, in affairs of State, definite evidence survives.

As Mr. C. L. Kingsford points out in his valuable monograph on Henry V., in the "Heroes of the Nations" series, "the domestic politics of the years 1406 to 1413 centre round the rivalry of the Arundel and Beaufort interests," and the young prince had from boyhood been much under the influence of his uncle, Henry Bishop of Winchester, while his father remained more in sympathy with the Arundel party. From 1404 to the date of his death in 1413, King Henry's health was too uncertain to allow him to sustain the full burden of monarchy, and Archbishop Arundel acted as head of the Council for three years. But when he was driven into resignation by the opposition party, and the Beaufort faction came into power, the young Prince of Wales became head of the Council in place of the man who had been—again to quote Mr. Kingsford—in a special sense the king's minister, and in 1411 the prince came into sharp conflict with his father on questions both of domestic and foreign policy. But when the situation included even the suggestion that the king should abdicate, owing to his broken health, he asserted himself, and, after dismissing Prince Henry and his chief adherents from the Council, reappointed Archbishop Arundel to be his chancellor. The prince's dismissal led to further party plots and counter-plots between the rival political factions, but the king's days were numbered. Henry had long suffered from epileptic attacks, and in March, 1413, while praying before the shrine of Edward the Confessor, in Westminster Abbey, he had a seizure to which he succumbed in the neighbouring "Jerusalem Chamber"—that being the nearest he was destined to come to the fulfilment of a long-cherished ambition to make a pilgrimage to the Holy City. His body was buried in the cathedral at Canterbury, and Henry, his son, reigned in his stead.



"PRINCE HENRY, AFTERWARDS HENRY V., AND HIS DYING FATHER, HENRY IV."

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Q.E.D.

DOCTOR: Dear me! How did it happen?
SUFFERER: Well, my wife was throwing stones at the neighbour's fowls, and I was standing behind her.

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

THE FATE OF MY PET JOKES.

THE other night, while looking over one of those old confessional albums in vogue some twenty-five years ago, my attention was caught by the answer to the question: "What do you consider the greatest earthly misery?" It read: "To have my pet jokes fall flat."

The feeling in these words struck me, for on that very day a dismal fate had befallen three of my own pet jokes.

I had once read in one of the papers with much amusement an anecdote attributed to a very well-known physician when, in the course of an address to nurses, he urged the necessity of occasionally using their imagination. He spoke of a certain doctor, one of whose patients was threatened with deliriuin tremens. So great was his anxiety about this patient that he left a medicine with the nurse, giving specific directions to administer a spoonful upon the first sign of his seeing *snakes*. Feeling very uneasy, the physician soon returned, only to have his worst fears confirmed. Turning to the nurse, he asked if the medicine had been given, but she shook her head.

"Why didn't you give it to him?" the doctor asked angrily.

"Because," was the reply, "you told me to give the medicine if he saw *snakes*. But he didn't; he saw *peacocks* with red, white, and blue jackets, and little yellow straw hats!"

This story, *à propos* of something that was said, I repeated with much zest. But the man to whom I told it only assumed a patient look, and then said wearily: "Just like a nurse!"

Later in the day I risked another of my favourites, of which I am so fond that I cannot resist repeating it. It was about an Irish girl,

just arrived at a new situation. Her employer, giving her a duster, set her to work in the drawing-room. In a few minutes the girl came running to her mistress in a most dreadful state of excitement, just managing to articulate—

"I'm going to lave, ma'am—I'm going to lave! But I did not do it—I did not knock the head off that ostrich-bird!"

When I explained that the ostrich-bird was nothing less than a large cast of the winged Victory of Samothrace, I certainly expected the situation would be appreciated. But not at all. My listener regarded me solemnly, and then said—

"If it had had a head on it, she probably would have knocked it off"—and then changed the subject.

On the same afternoon I made still another attempt to amuse—this time a very clever doctor. "Little Willie," I began—I trust the story may be new to some—"had so much money his mother began to wonder where it came from. Investigation brought to light the source of Willie's wealth. Away down at the extreme end of the garden, opening on a little back street, she found he had put up a sign. The sign read: 'I swallow one small green worm for a penny; I swallow one large furry worm for twopence; I swallow one small frog for threepence.'"

I looked up at the doctor. "That story couldn't be true," he said, "because, if he had swallowed the frog, he would have had convulsions!"

So I gave up. But that very night a friend came to see me, who remarked incidentally she could see nothing funny in a riddle I had propounded to her mother a few days before. The conundrum was: "Why is an author one of the queerest of animals?" and the answer is: "Because his tale (tail) comes out of his head." The answer that had been given was: "Because his *story* comes out of his head."

A. De Coursey Patterson.



YOUTHFUL PRECOCITY.

"Can your baby talk, auntie?"
"No, dear; he's only six weeks old."
"But *my* dolly is only *two* weeks old, and she can say 'Mamma' and 'Papa.'"

An old countryman had been standing for a considerable time at the top of Liverpool Street, and when asked the cause of his not moving on to his destination, remarked that he was waiting till the procession had gone by.

"I say, Tom, do you know why that fur thing your sister is carrying is called a 'muff'?"

"No, I give it up."

"Well, you see, it holds a lady's hand without squeezing it."

A child who lives in the country went shopping to the city with her mother for the first time. She had never been in a lift before.

"How did you like it?" said the father.

"Why, it was so funny, papa," answered the child. "We went into a little house, and the upstairs came down!"

Little Ethel had gone for the first time into the country and visited the farm. "Did you see them milk the cow, Ethel?" asked her mamma, on her return.

"No, mamma," was the reply, "but I saw them unmilk her."



THE YOUNGER GENERATION AGAIN!

"'ERE's a case for yer, constable. 'E's that fierce, 'e'll be takin' my life one of these days!"



FEMININE CONSISTENCY.

FLIPPANT YOUNG MAN: My pal 'ere wants to know if you're one of them Suffrergettes?

LADY (glowing): Certainly. I'm proud to say I am, and I would go——

FLIPPANT YOUNG MAN: H'm! Well, you look like one, too.

LADY (indignantly): You're a low, impertinent fellow!

UTILITY JACK.

I'm here and I'm there,
And I'm most everywhere,
For I'm Parson's right hand, if you please!
I buttons his gaiters,
And plants his pertaters,
And trims his young mulberry trees.
I cuts cake and meat
For the Sunday-school treat,
And carries the bairns on my back;
I scrubs every floor,
And I answers the door,
For I'm General-Utility Jack.

And if aught puts him out,
Then old Parson will shout:
"Where's that lazy Utility Jack?"
Oh, oh! Oh, oh!
"Where's that rascal, Utility Jack?"

Every Sunday at ten
I rings church bell, and then
I opens the door and I goes,
By way of digression,
To find the First Lesson,
Then t'organ I blows and I blows.
And if sermon's too long,
And I see that the throng
Are fretting and thinking, alack!
Of the joint over-brown,
Then I pulls Parson's gown,
For I'm General-Utility Jack.

And when folk are all pining,
To get to their dining,
It's "Where's our Utility Jack?"
Oh, oh! Oh, oh!
"What's become of Utility Jack?"

If a job's to be done,
Or an errand to run,
It's sure to be me the folk craves;
For the proud and stuck-up 'uns
I'm not caring tuppence,
For doesn't I dig all their graves?
But I'm dreading to say
What'll happen some day—
Things'll tumble to ruin and wrack
When the Master of all
Sends His word for to call
For General-Utility Jack!

T'other side of the blue
There'll be summat to do
For poor old Utility Jack!
So I'll get up and go
When I hear them call low
For Mister Utility Jack!
Oh, oh! Oh, oh!
"Where's that rascal, Utility Jack?"

Gunby Hadath.

TOMMY had heard a good deal about references for servants, but when the new maid arrived, he evidently got a little confused, for he asked his mother if she had had a *recipe* for her.



OF COURSE NOT!

MAGISTRATE: Was the deceased in the habit of talking to himself when he was alone?

WITNESS: I don't know.

MAGISTRATE: Come, come, you don't know, and yet you pretend that you were intimately acquainted with him?

WITNESS: But I never happened to be *with* him when he was *alone*.



THE PRIZE-WINNER.

"I BELIEVE old Hambone thinks he's the best judge of dogs in the town."
"I think he *is*, too. He's won three gold medals."
"What for—mongrels?"
"No, sausages."

"I WANT a licence," said the young man, adding, out of sheer enthusiasm, "to marry the best girl in the world."

"With pleasure," commented the clerk. "That makes over three hundred licences for that girl this season."

A LITTLE boy of seven was looking at pictures with his mother, who was an amateur photographer. He very much admired a copy of a famous picture of the angel choir. "Mummie," he asked, "did you take this photograph when you were up in the sky?"

ABERNETHY, the famous doctor, was supposed to influence people by a brusqueness amounting to absolute rudeness. It is related that one day a very voluble lady took her daughter to see him.

"Which of you two wants to consult me?" said Abernethy.

"My daughter," replied the elder woman.

Abernethy then put a question to the girl. Before she had a chance to reply, her mother began a long story. Abernethy told her to be quiet, and repeated his question to the girl. A second time the woman began a story, and a second time he told her to be quiet. Then she interrupted him a third time.

"Put your tongue out," he said to the mother.

"But there's nothing the matter with me," she exclaimed.

"Never mind — put your tongue out," he commanded.

Thoroughly overawed, the woman obeyed.

"Now keep it out," said Abernethy. And he proceeded to examine the girl.



THAT MISLEADING CHERUB!

VERGER (quoting from epitaph of celebrated general): "... An honour to his country, the beloved father of fifteen children, he died, universally regretted, at the age of ninety-five!"

SHORT-SIGHTED TOURIST: What an exceedingly young-looking man!

DISTRICT VISITOR (after reading letter from absent son): And what will you do with the striped kimono your son says he is sending home?

RUSTIC MOTHER: No wonder you ask, missie! I suppose I'll just have to keep it chained up in the back-yard, or put it in one of the pig-sties; but what I shall feed it on, goodness only knows!

IN class the boy was reading aloud, and came to the name "Psyche," hesitated a moment, and then said "Pysh." The master said "Pish!" too, but he didn't stop there; he said a good many other things that the boy thought were very rude.

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL teacher had been impressing upon his pupils the ultimate triumph of goodness over beauty. At the close of a story, in which he flattered himself that this point had been well established, he turned confidently to a ten-year-old pupil and inquired: "And now, Alice, which would you rather be — beautiful or good?"

"Well," replied Alice after a moment's reflection, "I think I'd rather be beautiful — and repent."

AN elderly rustic had been working around an automobile garage as a handyman for over a year. One day a former employer asked him how he was getting along in the automobile business.

"Fine," said he.

"I suppose you know everything about an automobile now, Tom?" he was then asked.

"Yes, sir, I knows a lot about them cars, for I've been working under them, and over them, and all around them. But there is just one thing about them automobiles that puzzles me," said Tom.

"What's that?"

"Well, sir, I can't get it into my head how they make them go without hitching a horse to them."



"THE SILVERY THAMES." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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"EVENING IN SURREY." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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THE ART OF MR. B. W. LEADER, R.A.

SECOND ARTICLE.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

IN our former article on the work of Mr. B. W. Leader, R.A., we were, from lack of space, able to do little more than tell of the incidents of his life, enumerate the titles of his pictures, and dwell a while on the aspects of Nature which specially appeal to him. In presenting a further selection from this artist's long gallery of pictures, we are reminded of the strenuous endeavour which those who pursue the difficult branch of art, landscape-painting, have to exercise if they are to touch Nature, as Mr. Leader has done, with the magic which is to make it rare.

There is for the landscape-painter a constant substitution, in his outlook, of Art for Nature. The accidents of his surroundings borrow their colour from his palette; their designs fit themselves, as it were, within the confined limits of a frame; and so heavily is Nature weighted for him with artistic meanings that the vignette on which he looks is a finished picture ere its transference to canvas is begun. The sweet novelties of a scene fill his mind with inexplicable ambition, even if he is forgetful of how much we create for ourselves in what we see.

Nature, we know, "can work miracles at her will. She can bid the almond tree blossom in winter, and send the snow upon the ripening corn. At her word the frost lays its silver finger on the burning month of June." But Art can do as much, if not more, than can Nature. She can fashion things of ugliness to beauty, make of the common the rare. At her word the shadow can become substance, and—a second Joshua—she can stay the journeying of the sun.

We scarcely need to go to Pater to realise that "clear perpetual outline of face and limb is but an image of ours under which we group people"—is but a combination of natural elements to which science has given a name. In the same way, the physical outlines of the objects of Nature—dales, hills, trees, sky, and water—are too unstable and flickering for anyone to attempt to reproduce actually their relative positions on canvas. All we can get, or hope to get, of any scene is what Rossetti happily termed "a

moment's monument." The painter's task is to take the skeleton of truth, and, by means of his discriminating faculty, clothe it with his own beautiful ideas. It is not for him to count the hairs of the "green-tressed goddess"; his province is but to convey to us some notion of the quality of her hyancinthine locks. He, in fact, has to look at Nature through the magic lens of Art, and shut his eyes to her many imperfections. Thus the sermons he finds in stones, and preaches to his lay brother, are those he, that which serves his art, and he looks out upon her less with the organs of physical sight than with the eyes of his artistic soul. It is in this attitude toward Nature—this raising from her of "a moment's monument"—that Mr. Leader has been so successful. He has, in each of his pictures, seized some particular aspect of her many moods, and with the supernaturally quickened artist sense has kept firm hold upon it during the many different brief phases of effect through which, as he works, the actual subject upon which



"GORING-ON-THAMES." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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as a sort of mental lithographer, has himself placed there.

The artist is, therefore, to be accepted as the critic, if unconscious critic, of Nature, and that unity which goes to form a picture, and is, indeed, a necessary quality of pictures, is put into his subject by him. As he looks at Nature, he sees only the picturesque. Indeed, the greater the artist, the less is he trammelled by fact, for the creative faculty in him is brought to a fine perfection by the training of the habit of selection, till at last the complete artist admires in Nature only he is engaged passes, as morning's long shadows shrink to those of noon and elongate again to those of eve.

When he stands in front of pigsties or cowsheds or sheep-pens, it is to reproduce them, not as a farm hand, cowman, or shepherd would see them, but as Morland did; from which the layman might argue that all objects are equally beautiful when touched by the magic of Art. But "there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differeth from another in glory," and



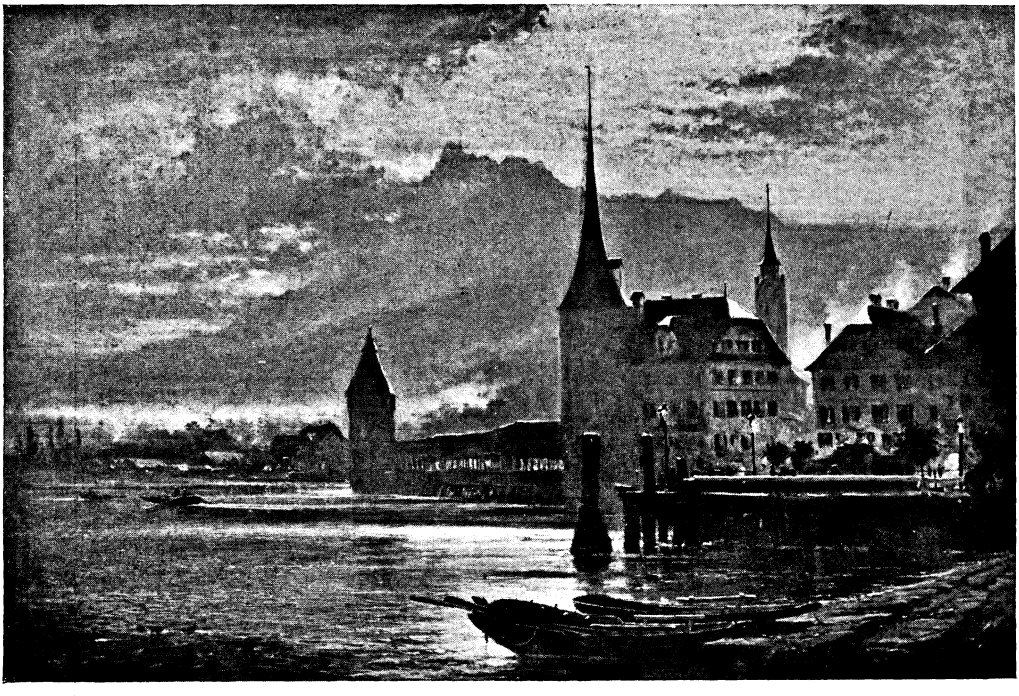
"THE EVENING HOUR." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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although "the whole earth is full of glory," the glory is of different dimensions, and so is one subject higher than another.

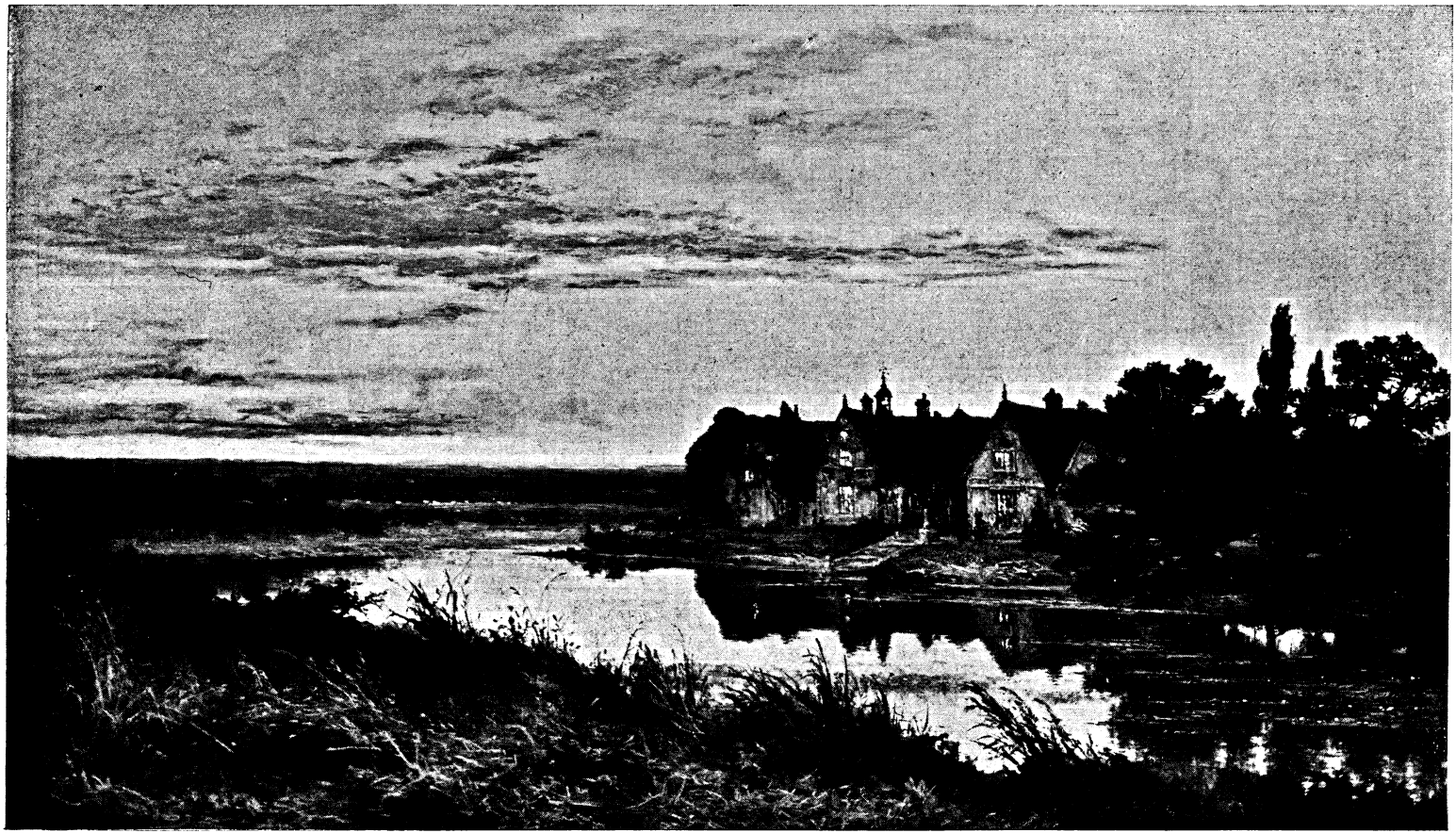
Sincerity of observation and expression are wonderfully shown in those, as it were, featureless pictures of open upland space, of sandy dunes, of which Mr. Leader is so fond, since they show an art which can deal truthfully—or seemingly truthfully, which is all we need pictorially—with that most difficult atmospheric matter, aerial perspective, and it is well illustrated in the pictures "At Evening Time It Shall Be Light," "The Sands at Littlehampton," "The Silvery Thames," "Sunshine and Shadow on the South Coast," and "Littlehampton Golf Links." The same quality, the same observation, he brings to bear upon his skies, and a fine sky, as one of the most consummate of writers and of critics once wrote, brings to birth in us "sentiments not unlike the love of one's Fatherland."

In "Sunset on the Surrey Weald" and "Sunshine and Shadow on the South Coast," to take two typical examples of sky effects, we see how faithful a student of the heavens Mr. Leader is. He has studied them, not as a master of pneumatics, of meteorology, or hydro-mechanics—who will tell you, from the inside of science, that the formation of clouds is dependent not only on the humidity of the air, but on particles of dust as nuclei for every beginning of condensation of vapour, since in a dustless atmosphere no cloud could ever form—but he has studied them with that insight into their design which makes of clouds, whether cirro-cumulus, alto-cumulus, cumulus, or stratus, such essential parts of landscape art. Always he paints his clouds as full of daylight, as active in space, the playthings of the weather, and the children of the winds. In "Sunset on the Surrey Weald," Mr. Leader takes us into an older time than our own, although, perhaps, not to another land, since nowhere but in England could we get the velvety pasturage, or the feeling as of a bearable heat dropped upon the scented ground from a remote sky. But the calm leisure suggested by the plentiful flock, the vast, deep silences, the wind-winged clouds, the waterless, grass-covered slopes, erase centuries, and we are back in sylvan times, in which railways were unknown, and when the shepherd played upon the pipes to while away the hours.



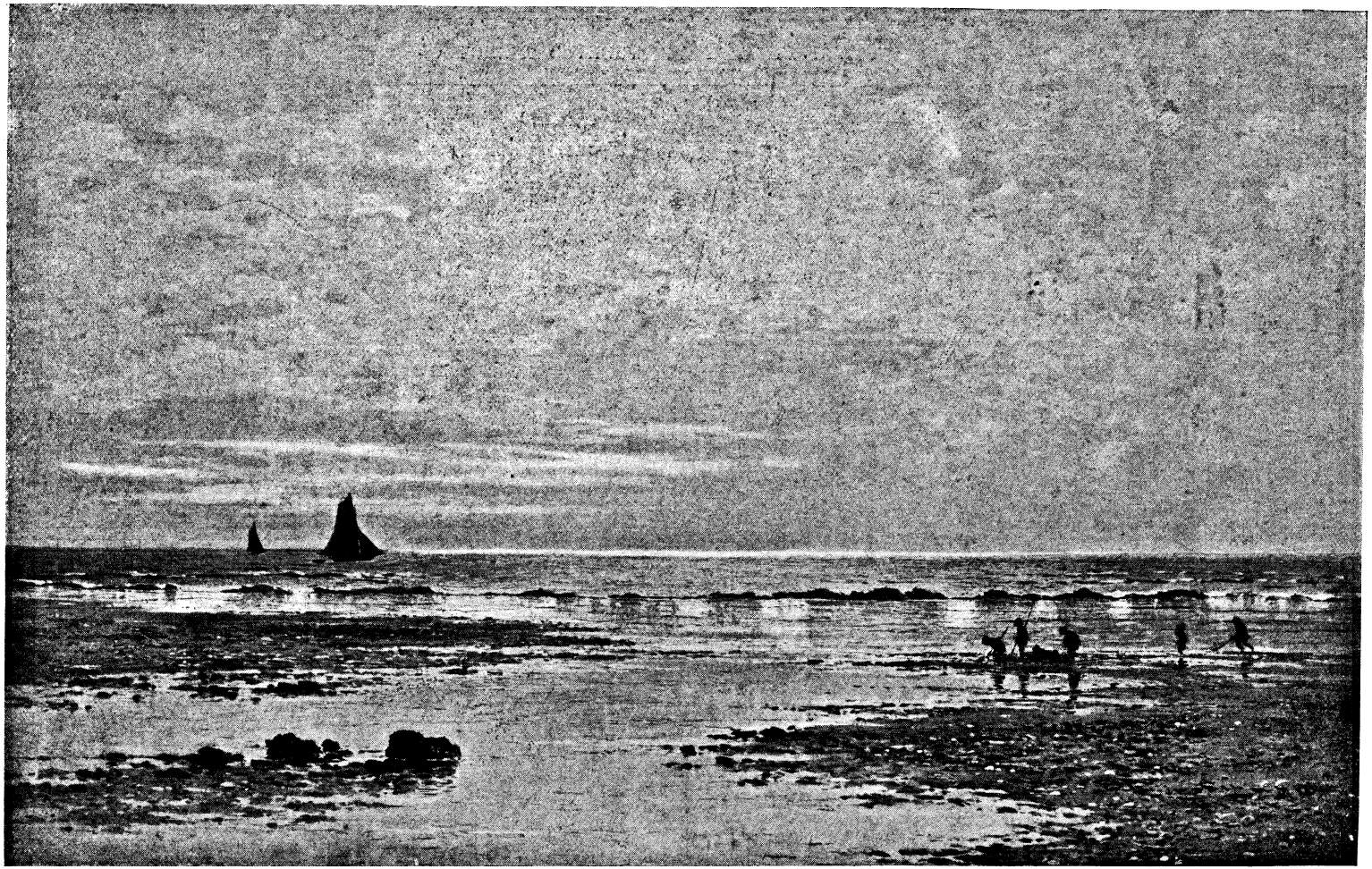
"LUCERNE BY MOONLIGHT, 1877." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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"A LONELY GRANGE." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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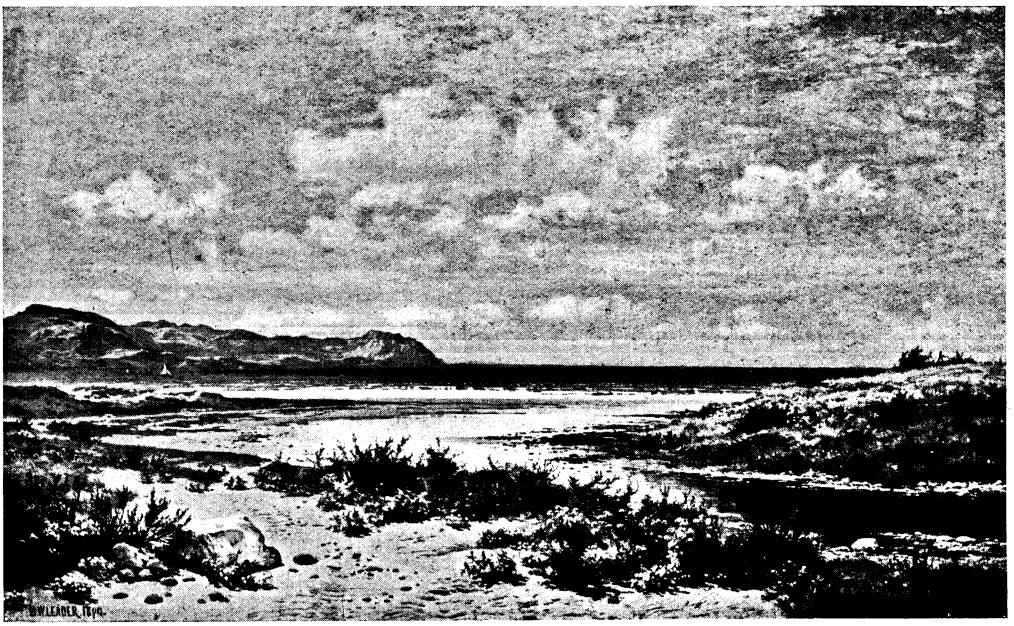


"A FINE DAY ON THE COAST, TOWYN." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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Mr. Leader knows his England in a circle rather than in a line, since neither the Land's End nor John o 'Groats has attracted him. With the levels of the Thames he is intimately familiar. He has followed its winding course through Faringdon and Bampton, has skirted Blenheim, and, entering the Vale of the White Horse, has seen its junction with the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal. He has followed its turning southwards to Goring, Wallingford, and Reading, and seen its margins as they open to receive the Kennet; he has loitered at Henley and Marlow, and Maidenhead and Eton, and Windsor and Datchet and Staines. Even is largely represented in his work. "Evening," "A Welsh River," "A Summer's Morn," and "In a Welsh Valley," all demonstrate his love for that country, rich in fruit and pasture-land, singular in suggestion of volcanic abruptness, interpenetrated by dark, deep dells and smiling softness of silk-clad slopes.

Fond as Mr. Leader has shown himself to be of waterways, there is that same sense of harmony between him and his physical surroundings when he finds himself upon the heath in all the sumptuous bravery of its gaudy summer dress. He paints these flat, open spaces of broken ground as if he

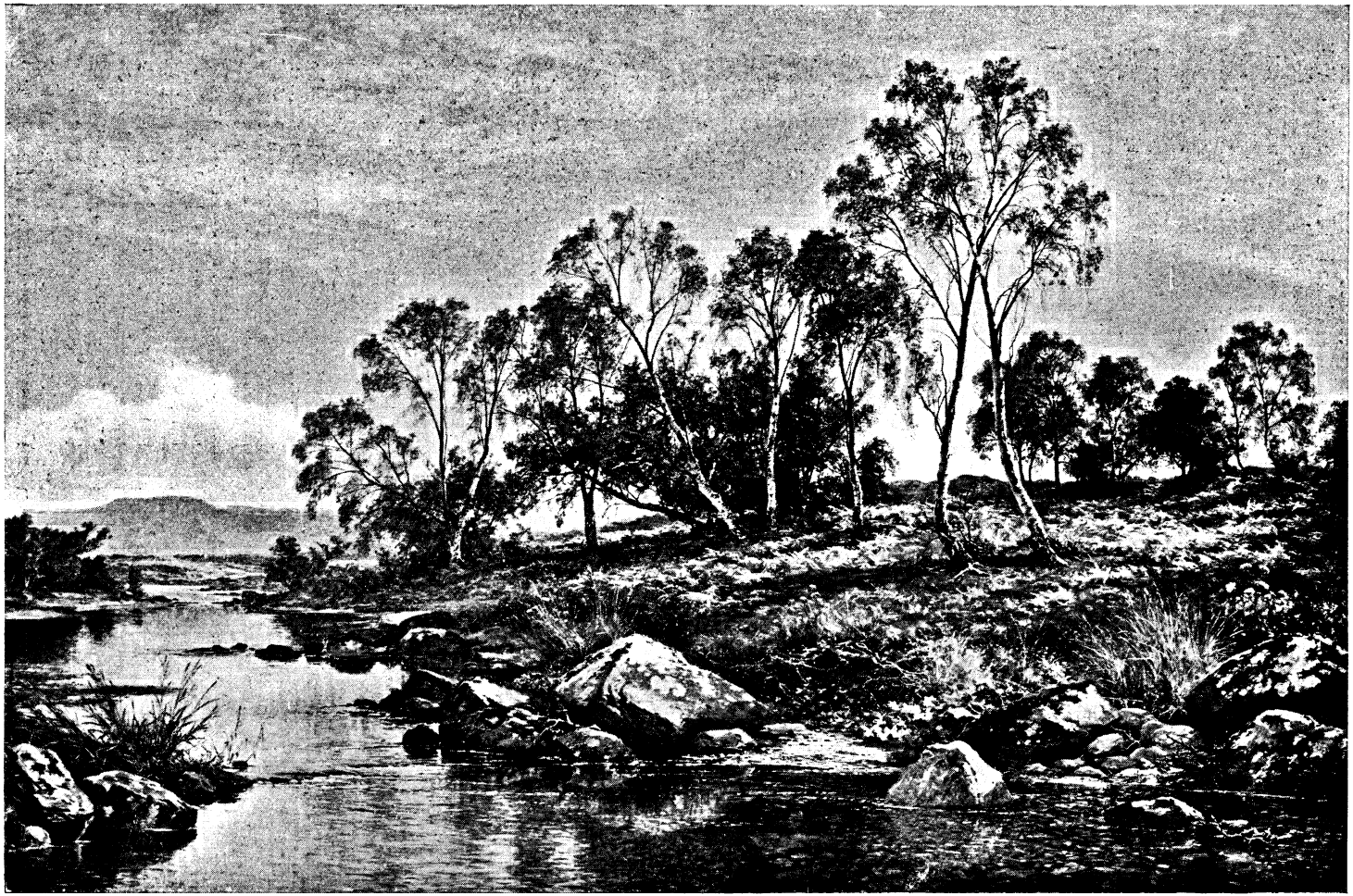


"WHERE SEA AND RIVER MEET." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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Chertsey and Teddington have enticed him, and "A Summer Day on the Thames," "Early Morning," "A Shallow Stream at Eventide," "A Grey Day on a Flowery Stream," "An Old English Homestead," "The Evening Hour," "The Silvery Thames," are each records of his love for the most important river in England. Strung together, such records of our great river are like a rosary, each bead of which is beautiful in design.

For more austere and rugged water-beds, he has gone farther afield. The Severn and the Stour, the Avon and the Wye, he has not neglected. Wales, indeed, loved them, as is, we are assured, the case. He gives us the views of widely variegated Surrey in "A Surrey Sunset," and "Across the Heath," in which last canvas Scotch firs stand sentinel-like on great uncultivated tracks of gorse-grown land, showing us in turn the dark blue marl, the white chalk, the shaly clay. Or he is attracted to some meadow in the cheerful candour of the midday hour, when, as in "The Silvery Thames" and "The Hayfield," the husbandmen are at their toil; and he shows us the parti-coloured stripes of green and grey, as the men with scythes, passing up and down the undulating, sloping ground, have



"A SILVERY MORN." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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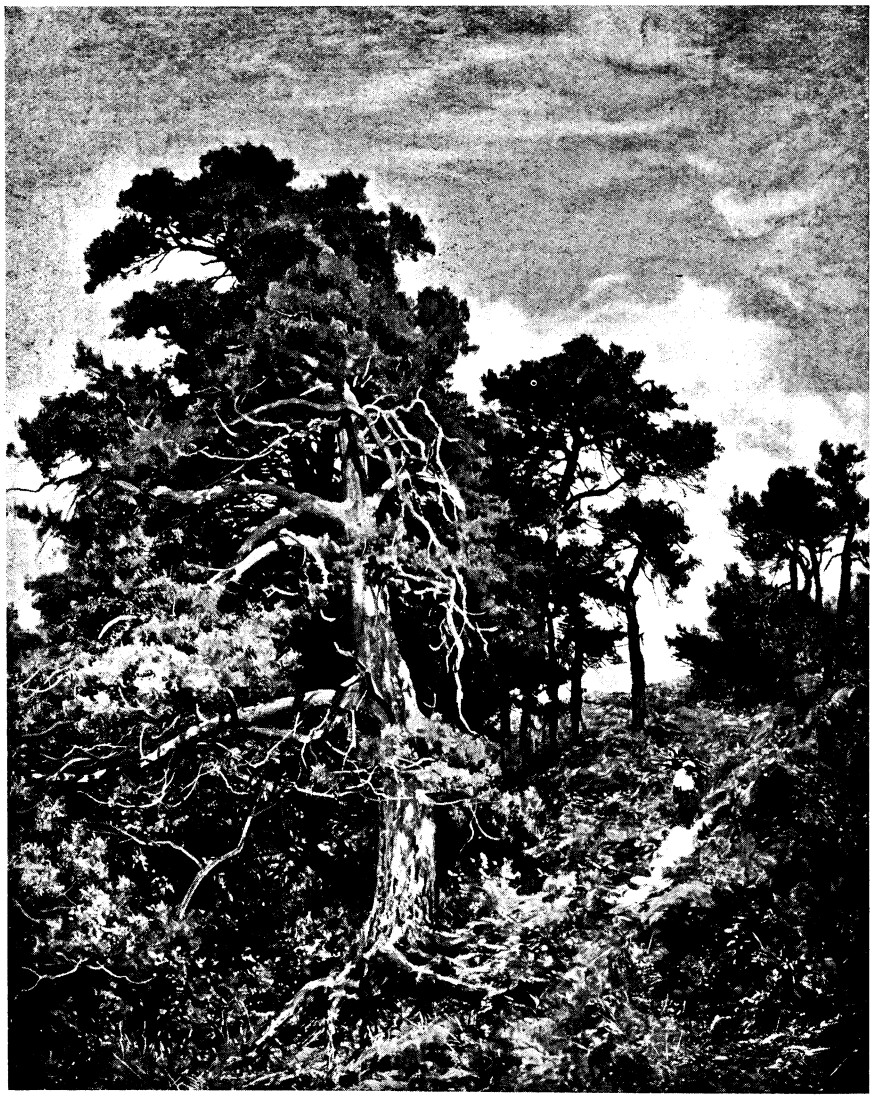


"A GOLDEN EVE." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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adroitly laid its blossoming yield in regular, reversed order. He shows us also the fresh verdure in the cleared spaces unfolded by degrees, till the whole ground, once again, is displayed as vivid green.

and again, but never for important pictures, he has turned his talent to the portrayal of woods, and given us the "Wood at Gomshall," and "Sunset, Pine Wood, Holmbury." But such umbrageous scenes are not much

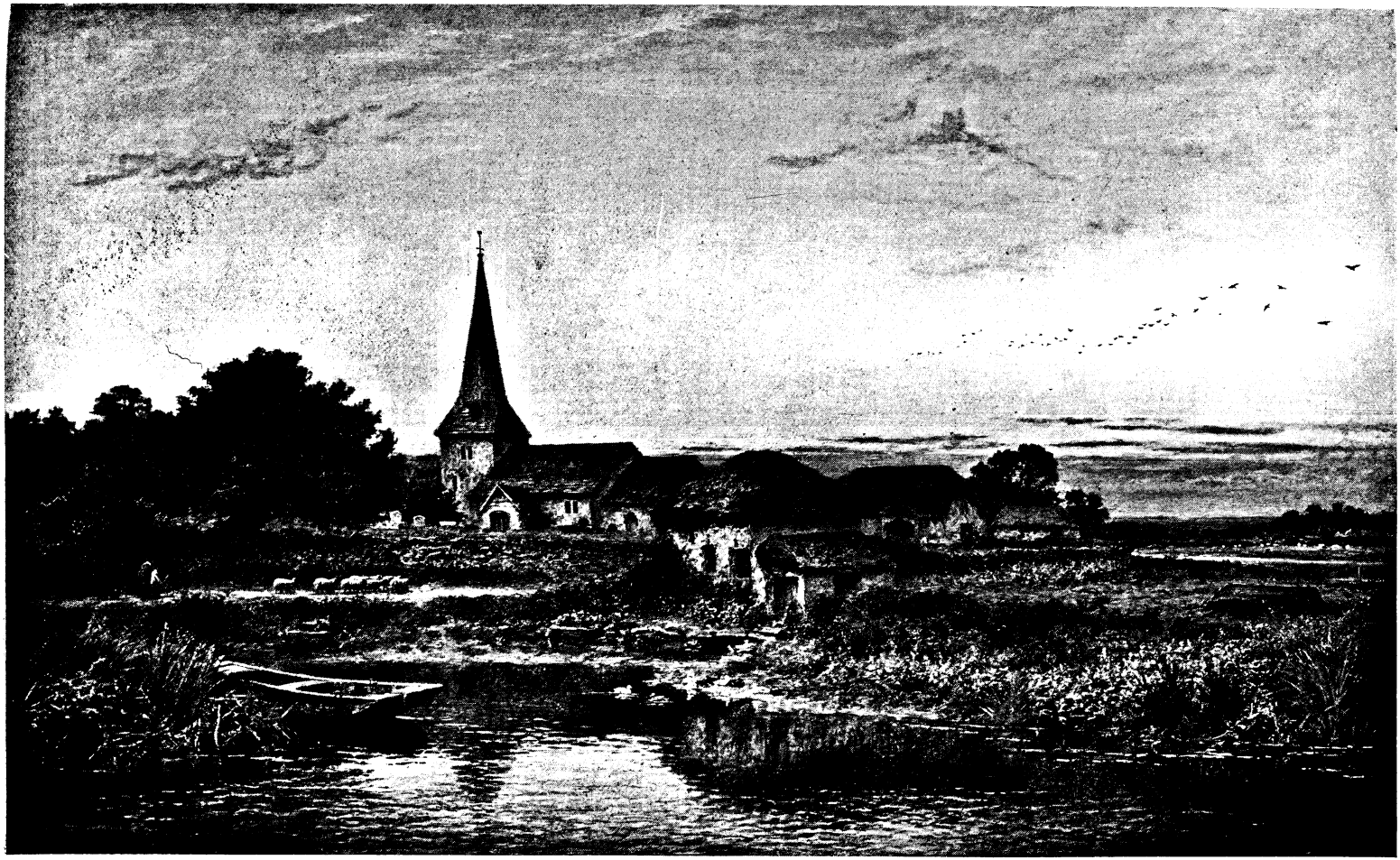


"SURREY PINES." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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In such pictures as "The Sands of Aberdovey," "The Incoming Tide," "The Sandy Margin of the Sea," "The Silver Sea," "Where Sea and River Meet," "Cambria's Coast and Conway Bay," he shows himself to have been captivated by the coast. Now to his liking, for always he returns to open spaces, which the charm that comes of sentiment so much more largely encompasses.

Some few pictures of historic places Mr. Leader has painted, such as that fine monastic ruin of the Cistercians, Tintern



"A QUIET EVENING." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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"EVENTIDE." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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Abbey, Worcester Cathedral, Chepstow Castle, and the lock and church at Stratford-on-Avon ; but mostly the architectural work which has found its way on to his canvas has been of some little English homestead or church, conjured there by that feeling of sentiment which ever places simplicity alongside beauty, as in "At Evening Time It Shall Be Light," "The Evening Hour," "The Ploughman Homeward Plods His Weary Way," "The Hayfield," "On the Stour," "An Old English Homestead," "Early Morning, Goring-on-Thames." It is love for this same harmony which has so often led Mr. Leader to flood his canvases with the horizontal sunshine of both early and late hours—a sunshine which always gives a certain air of refinement to the rugged scene over which it is spread, and which is absent from the vertical glare of noon.

Pure serenity apace
Induces thought and contemplation still.

"A love of Nature," writes that excellent critic, Mr. Spielmann, "has always been one of the best British characteristics, and it has proved itself to be strong enough to keep those artists who seek their inspirations out of doors from falling to any great extent under the control of any particular technical fashions . . . On the whole, this branch of Art has gained in power and confidence, without surrendering that sturdy independence which in the past produced such momentous results."

Mr. Leader is a painter who has never surrendered that sturdy independence, productive of momentous results, of which Mr. Spielmann writes. He is a painter who, since 1854, has pursued his own way, seeing life, form, colour, romance, beauty, always through his own eyes. We had but to look at the work by which he was represented in last year's Academy to recognise his capacity for design, his gift of selecting and presenting the pictorial elements to be found in Nature, as prodigal of proof that he owes his reputation to faculty and skill rather than to any caprice of public taste.

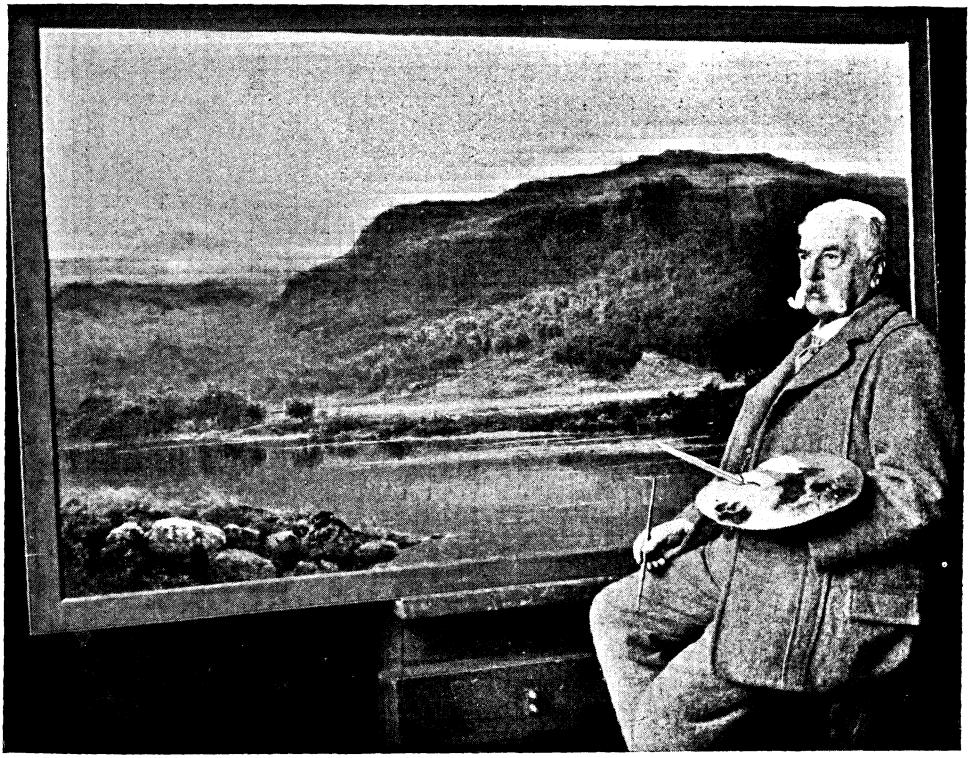


Photo by] *[The London News Agency.*

MR. B. W. LEADER AT WORK ON ONE OF HIS PICTURES OF WELSH RIVER SCENERY.

JUST LIKE KIMBER.

By E. R. PUNSHON.

THE talk in the club smoking-room had turned on Johnny Kimber, and more than one of us wondered aloud what had become of him, and if we were ever likely to hear of him again, and what new scrapes he had got into. Just two years had passed since, being then in hotter water even than usual, Johnny had found it necessary to leave England with some haste, and during all those two years no word of him had reached any one of us.

Johnny Kimber always had a talent for getting into trouble. Very good-natured, of course, but a born fool, if ever there was one, and apparently quite without a will of his own. Take him in the right way, and anybody could get him to do anything; and yet he was a very clever fellow, too, and very well read. But, somehow, he never seemed able to attach their true value to things. He would spend hours over trifles that were of no real importance, and neglect valuable business opportunities wholesale. It was as though he had a standard of his own different from that of anyone else. For example, he was fond of dogs, and once a friend gave him a pure bred—I forget the breed, but I know it was a prize-winner. Kimber kept it about a week, and then got rid of it somehow, though it was really a valuable animal, while a measly little mongrel he picked up in the gutter he treated like a child, and nearly broke his heart when Lord Walham run over it. In fact, he was jolly rude to poor Walham, and, as a consequence, the Countess struck his name off her visiting list.

The end came at last when he got himself mixed up with some fraudulent company promoting scheme, and presently found himself saddled with the full responsibility for what had been done. It was touch-and-go whether he went to gaol over the affair or not, for as the judge said to him: "Mr. Kimber, you seek to prove you are not a knave by showing yourself a fool. Which you are is for the jury to say, but I must confess that you show yourself in other ways to be an extremely clever and cultured man."

Fortunately for poor Johnny, the jury gave him the benefit of the doubt, but he found things so hot after his discharge that he was obliged to leave England.

"Yes, he was a funny chap," observed the man who had introduced his name into the talk, "but I rather liked him in some ways, though he was such a footler."

"He was rather a futile person," I agreed, "but he had his points." And I added that more than one of the club servants had inquired about him and seemed sorry he had gone.

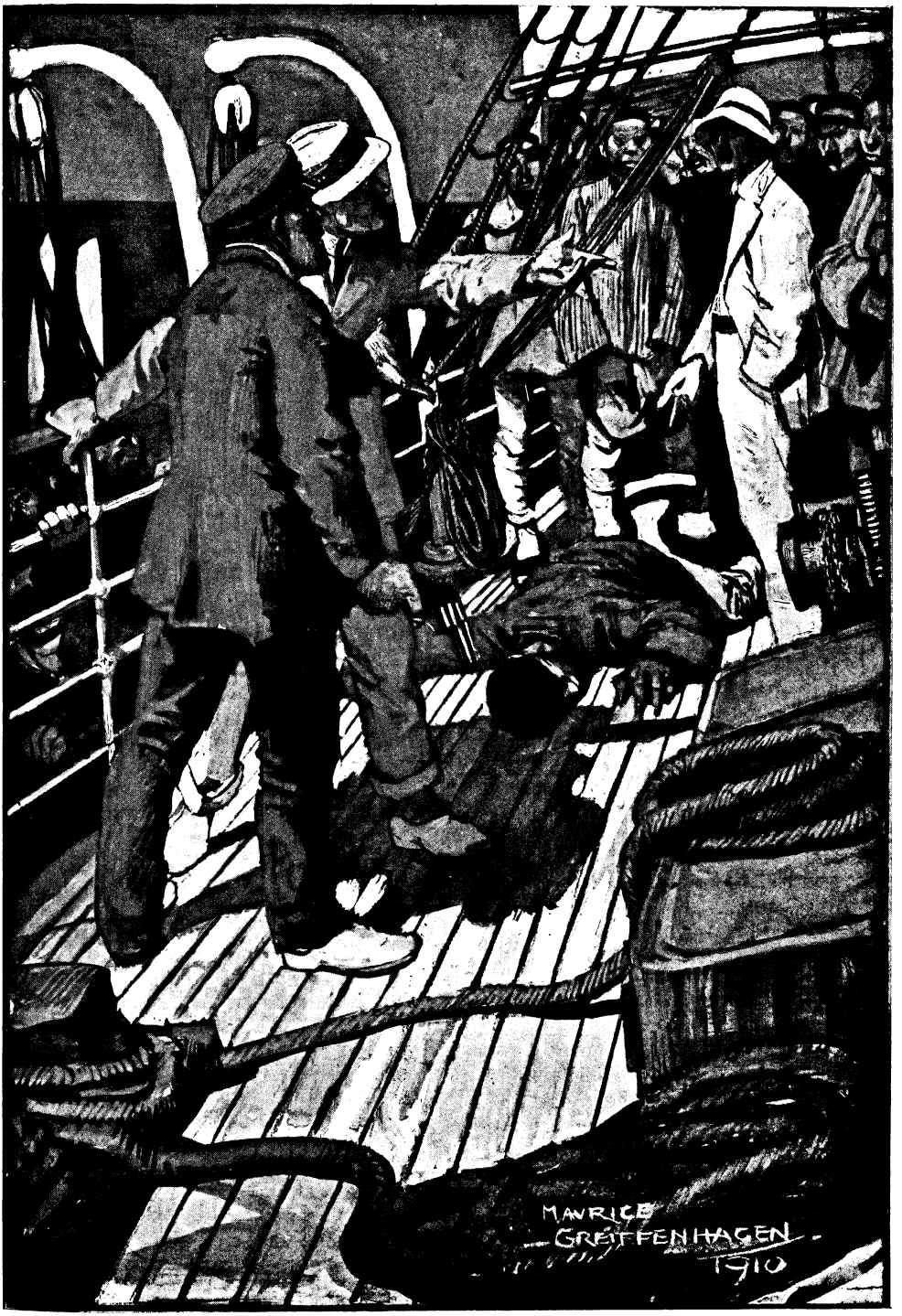
"That's just like Kimber," interposed somebody else—"he was always friendly with anyone who could be no possible good to him. He had expectations from his uncle, and quarrelled with him over the housing of some of the cottagers on the estate, with the result that the whole property went to another nephew. Any man with any sense would have waited till he got the property, and then indulged any fad about housing he had. And then he had a row with Sir Matthew Lloyd, who might have done a good deal for him in business, and all about some trifle; while waiters or cabmen, or any low-down fellow who could never be any use to him, he would be as civil to as possible. Why, the very day he had his row with Sir Matthew, he walked all the way to Kilburn to take some grapes to a sick kid of some cabman's. Very decent of him, of course, but why couldn't he just tip the cabman and be done with it, like any ordinary Christian?"

"Just like Kimber," said another man, with a smile. "If you were rich and influential, he would quarrel with you in a minute; if you were down on your luck, he was quite obsequious."

Sitting in the corner, while this idle talk ran on, was a man whom none of us knew well. It was understood that he was a great traveller, and that he had been a good deal in the East. Looking up now, he said—

"I knew a man named Kimber out in

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"Kimber made a little gesture towards the dead body of the Chinese sailor."

Shanghai. Was your Kimber a tall, thin chap, with blue eyes and a long, thin nose, and a rather curious, absent manner, and a great habit of saying: 'Oh, by Jove'?"

"That's the man," agreed a chorus among us. "What was he doing? How was he getting on? Did he seem all right?"

"Well, when I knew him," the stranger answered slowly, "he was in rather low water. He had been working in the office of some Chinese merchant, who had just given him the sack."

"Oh, he would," said someone, laughing, "but I expect the Chinese merchant's office boys and porters simply adored him."

"I believe that was so," agreed the stranger gravely.

"Do you know where he is now?" I asked, for even if Kimber had been a somewhat futile sort of person, I liked him well enough.

"No," the stranger answered. After a pause he added: "You see, he's dead—in fact, he committed suicide!"

There was a general chorus of astonishment, for suicide was the last thing any of us would ever have suspected Johnny Kimber of.

"It was this way," the stranger continued. "I was a trifle hard up myself, and Kimber and I chummed together a good bit. We both wanted to clear out of Shanghai, and we took passage on the same boat to Hong-Kong. As you may guess, considering the state of our finances, we didn't book our passage by one of the swell German or English liners. The boat we went on was a rotten, leaky tub half a century old, with engines you had to tie together with bits of string. She belonged to a Chinese firm, and was employed in the coasting trade. The only Europeans on board were the captain, a huge fellow well over six feet high, the two mates, the two engineers, both Mac-something or another, the purser, a drunken little Cockney, Kimber, myself, and two other passengers, two German drummers, who may have been hard up like us, or else, perhaps, just making a bit by travelling with us and charging their firms at liner rates Also, we had on board about five hundred coolies, and the crew, about forty in number, were all Chinese, too.

"The weather was good, and we puffed along at about seven knots an hour, I should think, emitting smoke enough to cover half Asia; and on the second morning, soon after breakfast, we ran into something, and knocked a hole in our bottom big enough to drive a cart through pretty nearly. The captain swore it was a derelict. I believe it was a rock, and that we had kept too near land, which was only about seven or eight miles on the starboard. Anyhow, we had knocked an infernal big hole in our side, and we could hear the water coming in like a millrace. Also, we had just one small boat that would float. It would hold about ten at a pinch, and on board, all told, we had about five hundred and fifty souls, of whom ten were Europeans, and the rest a mob of coolies, as like one another as peas in a pod.

"It didn't need any telling to make us understand what had happened. The water was pouring in a mile a minute, and there were five hundred and fifty of us who saw death's hand beckoning us away.

"There was no panic, not even any particular excitement. The silence of the blue sky above, the air around, the sea beneath that waited to engulf us, was matched by the silence on our crowded decks, where we had so suddenly come face to face with death. I remember very distinctly seeing the captain lift his hand and beckon to the two mates. He did not speak, but it seemed they understood, for they went at once to the side and began to launch the little boat that offered life to ten out of five hundred and fifty.

"It seemed an extraordinarily noisy operation, this launching the boat. While it was being done, I became aware that every one of those Chinamen had his eyes fixed on the captain. The whole five hundred coolies were grouped together, and they were all simply staring at the man on whom they thought their lives depended. They did not speak, they did not move; they stood or sat, dumb and passive still, as they had been since coming on board. I suppose everything seemed equally strange to them, and as they had trusted themselves entirely to others ever since they started on their journey, so they still continued to trust. Perhaps this sudden shock and the inrush of water into the bowels of the ship seemed no more strange to them than other things they had seen since leaving their homes. I thought a few of the crew showed more alarm, but the captain roared an order at them, and they went to their places and stood there, waiting like the coolies.

"One of the mates came up to the captain and whispered that the boat was ready.

"He nodded and took a revolver out of his pocket and stood holding it—a very big, formidable figure of a man, on whom more

than half a thousand pairs of eyes were fixed with a strange and passive intentness.

"He said nothing, but it seemed we all understood each other, we ten Europeans. The second mate was sitting in the bow of the boat, holding on to the side of the sinking ship with a boat-hook, all ready to push off. The first mate stood on the deck just above. One by one each of us Europeans—the engineers had come up from below—sidled towards him, and he helped us over the rail, and we dropped into the boat beneath.

"Just as it came to my turn, one of the Chinese sailors moved out from the crowd and walked rather quickly towards the captain. I don't know what he wanted. His manner was not hostile; I imagine he just wished to ask for instructions. When he was about three yards distant, the captain raised his pistol and shot him dead. I know the report of the pistol, shattering the silence in which all hitherto had passed, so startled me that I nearly fell as the mate was giving me a hand over the rails. I glanced round, and saw the captain standing with the smoking pistol in his hand, and before him lay the body of the Chinaman in a heap, looking very small and shrunken. Not one among the other Chinese moved or spoke; they remained impassive and motionless, their narrow eyes fixed intently on the captain.

"It is a strange and somewhat terrifying thing to see so many men all gazing upon one, watching and waiting.

"I got safely into the boat. We were all in now except Kimber and the captain. There was a pause—a dreadful pause. As we waited, we saw the ship roll slightly, as a stricken animal will stagger on its feet before collapsing. One of the mates called something, and the captain leaned over the rails and looked down on us, his harsh face pale and altered.

"'By Heavens,' he said, 'he won't come!'

"I rose in my place and, catching hold of the rope, clambered back on board. Kimber was standing with his arms folded. The captain was talking to him in a very quick, excited way, and all those Chinamen still remained motionless, watching intently with their eyes fixed on the two white men.

"'Kimber, Kimber, you fool!' I cried, 'Quick—there's no time to lose!'

"The captain turned to me, gesticulating violently.

"'He's mad, mad, mad!' he shouted. 'For the last time, are you coming, you madman?'

"'And what of these?' asked Kimber, nodding towards the crowd of watching coolies, half a thousand pairs of eyes all intent on him and the captain.

"'We can't help that!' the captain cried angrily, and from below the voice of the first mate roared to us to hurry. 'The boat will only hold ten,' the captain urged.

"'It would hold ten Chinamen,' said Kimber.

"'Oh, you're mad!' cried the captain.

"'Let's fling him in,' I said hurriedly. 'Knock him down, and we'll fling him in!'

"Kimber drew back a step as if to prepare for an assault. Under our feet the ship lurched heavily, to remind us we had no time to spare for fighting.

"'You fool, come!' said the captain. 'We can't leave you, man. Would you make murderers of us?'

"His face was pale with horror as he spoke, but Kimber made a little gesture towards the dead body of the Chinese sailor, lying shot through the heart.

"'I couldn't help that; it was necessary,' the captain said quickly. 'But you're white; it's different. White men must stick together.'

"'Kimber, Kimber,' I shouted, 'what good do you think you will do by stopping?'

"'An educated man like you!' the captain cried. 'For Heaven's sake, come along!'

"'You silly footler!' I said, edging towards him with intent to run in and down him, when on a sudden the first mate's voice came roaring over the side again—

"'Ahoy, there! We've pushed off! Jump overboard, and we'll pick you up.'

"'At him,' yelled the captain, 'or he'll make us his murderers!'

"He ran at him as he spoke, but Kimber jumped to one side and then went quickly forward among the crowd of coolies, impassive, waiting, motionless.

"'It's no good,' said the captain, with a groan. 'Overboard!'

"I hesitated a moment, but the ship was trembling under our feet. I climbed the rails and sprang into the sea, and the captain after me, and they took us into the boat and then rowed away as fast as they could.

"We had gone, perhaps, a couple of hundred yards when we saw the ship put her stern into the air and her nose deep down, and dive straight into the depths. I believe those coolies drowned sitting impassive and motionless, as they had been all the time."

With the end of the stranger's story there

was silence for a minute or two, and then someone asked hesitatingly—

"You were picked up, then?"

"Oh, we made land easily enough," the stranger answered. "It was not ten miles distant, and the sea was quite calm."

"And—no one else? Not on planks, or swimming, or anything?"

"There are sharks in those seas," said the stranger; and he got up and stretched himself, as if tired with sitting and talking so long.

"Poor Kimber!" one of the audience said. "Rather a futile sort of end."

"I don't see that he did any good," observed another man. "Of course, if he could have saved them——"

"There doesn't seem much sense in that sort of thing," agreed another man. "Not practical."

"The fact is," I interposed, watching the stranger as he moved towards the door, "the whole thing was just like Kimber."

"Just like Kimber," agreed more than one of the others.

The stranger opened the door, but, in the act of crossing the threshold, he paused and looked back.

"I wonder who was the fool?" he said meditatively, and went out.

BALLADE OF FASHION.

"*Dans la robe est toute sa puissance.*"—BALZAC.

WHERE are the fashions our mothers knew,
And where the styles of the "Empress Joe,"
The tastes that the elder days outgrew?
Alas, they sleep in their satin woe!
There were shawls from Cashmere, white as snow,
There were hoops and bustles and other gear;
But the latest fashion o'er them doth crow—
The *dernière mode* is the Chantecler!

Where is the age of powder and queue,
Of rich brocade, of belle and beau?
To an English wharf, by an English crew,
Were brought the silks of Tokio,
Strange fabrics Malabar could show,
The pluckiest privateers could dare.
All these are gone where the vain hopes go—
The *dernière mode* is the Chantecler!

While fashions came and while fashions flew,
Where are the figures of Youth's first glow?
The slim and *svelte* have earned their due;
They have worn their best by high and low.
A chill wind out of the past doth blow,
To smite them, rich and poor, with fear.
But, *entre nous*, here's the newest *mot*—
The *dernière mode* is the Chantecler?

Envoi.

Good Mother Nature, you're taxed enow
(Fresh eggs have been on the ice a year,
With the ghosts that laid them, row by row!)—
The *dernière mode* is the Chantecler!



"I have often come upon him, in a corner of the garden, with an expression of one about to burst."

THE CASE OF BERTRAM PORTER.

By E. F. BENSON.

BERTRAM PORTER was barely thirty when he died in the meanly tragic manner which will be here narrated, but for years before that he had been a very great nuisance to all those who had the misfortune of being acquainted with him and who had not dropped him. In all respects but one he was a delightful fellow, full of kindliness and humour, cheerful, unselfish, indulgent to the weakness of others, and elastic under the blows and buffets which this remarkable state of affairs called human life rains down upon the most fortunate of our race. But this one defect of his was serious. It was as if a homicidal maniac was recommended to our good graces, and we were told that in all respects but one he was a man eminently livable with. Also, in the sad case of Bertram Porter, his one defect gradually invaded and blotted out his other merits, even as the cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, effaces the blue sky of a

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benignant summer day. His defect—to put the reader out of suspense, and to assure him that no attempt is being made to interest him in the career of some moral delinquent like a cannibal or a second-rate pianist—was that he thought about his own health.

When first I knew him, he was a medical student at one of the great London hospitals, and he appeared to be a person who might quite easily become of some use to the world and a pleasure to his friends. But even then the little cloud was already risen on the horizon, and I became aware of it when he dropped into my rooms late one night to smoke a pipe and drink a glass of whisky and water.

"You haven't got such a thing as a piece of sticking-plaster?" he asked as he entered.

I had not, and told him so.

"I scratched my hand somewhere getting down from the 'bus," he said. "No, it is not exactly bleeding, but the outer part of the skin is rubbed. Ah, well, it doesn't matter! But have you any sort of disinfectant I can dab on it?"

I was not the fortunate possessor of any disinfectant, but suggested that, if he were anxious, the fire was burning well, and a red-hot poker could easily furnish him with a satisfactory cautery. He laughed at this, lit his pipe, and helped himself liberally to whisky and cold water. It seems to me now quite extraordinary that it is only eight years ago that I saw him freely partaking of these two violent poisons—alcohol and nicotine. Then he settled himself in his chair, and began talking in that eager manner that was so characteristic of him.

"Yes, all you fellows who know nothing about your wonderful bodies may laugh at me," he said, "but the more I see of illness in the hospital, the more I learn how preventable it all is. There is not a single disease that we could not prevent if only we all knew just the elements of the laws of health, and took the simplest precautionary methods."

"Typhoid and cholera, and that sort of thing?" I asked.

"Oh, not only those," he said. "Cholera is stamped out in England, typhoid soon will be, diphtheria is no longer to be feared now we have the antitoxin treatment. There are the great foreign enemies, so to speak, that attack us, just as this scratch on my hand is for the moment a place where a foreign enemy, a staphylococcus or streptococcus, might enter."

"Don't know them," said I.

"Lucky fellow! If ever you had had a boil or a carbuncle, you would have made acquaintance with a staphylococcus; if ever you had had an abscess, you would have harboured a streptococcus."

"I did last year. I suppose the dentist took the streptococcus away. That will do, I suppose?"

"Yes, and he took the tooth with it. You ought to have been in such a condition that your phagocytes ate up the streptococcus, instead of letting it breed and multiply."

I cannot now remember all he said that night, for he talked late, and indulged more than once in the two virulent poisons of which I have spoken—alcohol and nicotine—and his discourse was somehow strangely fascinating. He told me about the beneficent armies of phagocytes that swarm in our blood, ready to pounce on and devour all malignant intruders, about the means whereby they can be encouraged to eat the various microbes which from time to time find lodgment within us. He spoke, too, not only of the external foes that assail us, but of the auto-intoxicants that are strangely bred within us, foes of our own household, so to speak—the self-generated poisons that produce gout and rheumatism and arterio-sclerosis, diabetes, possibly cancer, and all the diseases which age and kill people when the first vigour of their youth is past. All these, he said—far more insidious foes than the hordes of typhoid and cholera-producing germs—could certainly be met, and, what was more to the point, be guarded against, so that a man might and should attain his century of years and more in serene and splendid health. As I have said, it was all intensely interesting, and yet at the end, when he rose to go, and lit yet another pipe to comfort him on his way home—for all vehicular traffic had long ago ceased—I felt somehow distrustful of it all.

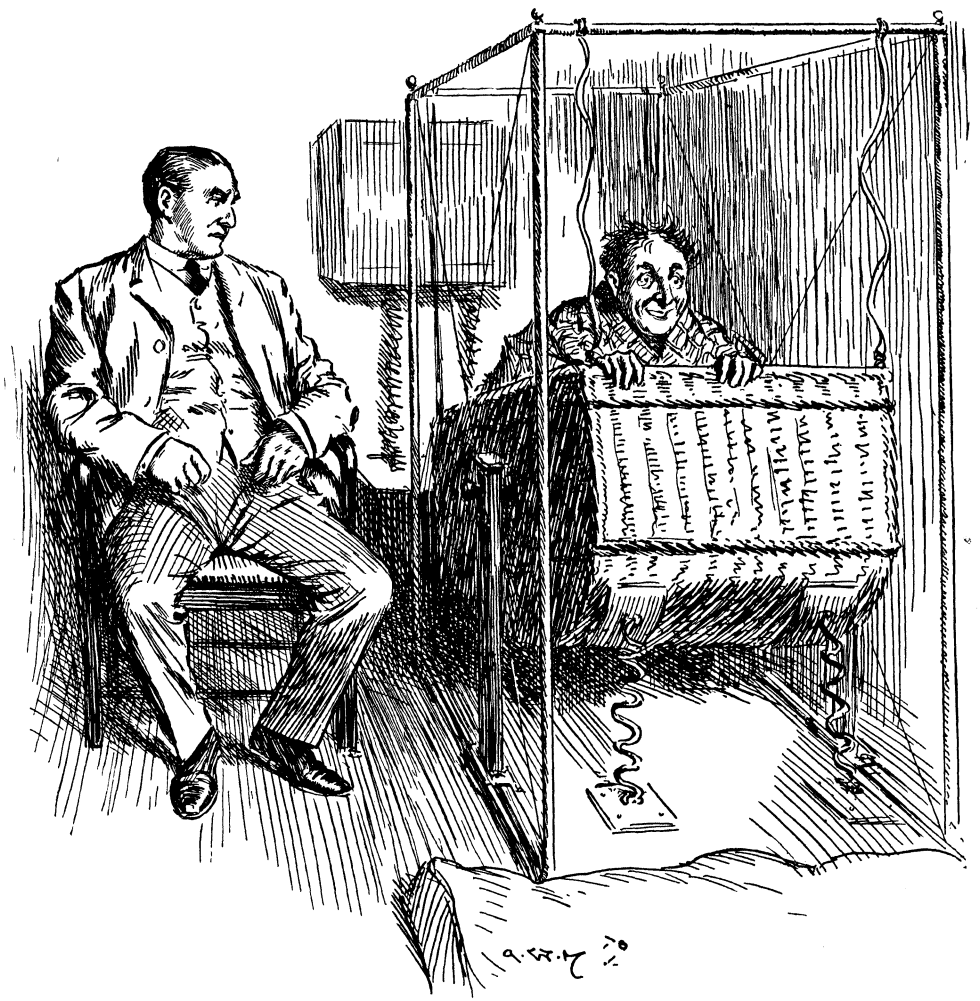
"Well, it's all like a charming fairy tale," I said, "and I shall try to think of it as a fairy tale, if I think of it at all. But probably I shall do my best to forget it."

"But why?" he asked.

"Because if I thought of it as real, which I am sure it is, I should devote all my time to thwarting the enemies and breeding the friends. I dare say it's all right for you, since it is your profession, but it would never do for a man who was employed in other ways. I shall leave my—my opsonic equation to solve itself. Anyhow, I am glad to see you are not consistent yourself. You have told me that nicotine is a cardiac

irritant, and thus disturbs the circulation, but if that isn't the fifth pipe you have smoked to-night, it is the sixth."

He looked at it regretfully—it was burning well—and then knocked it out on my hearth. "You're quite right," he said. "I smoke too much. Also, nicotine is an irritant of the mucous membrane, and certainly makes it more liable to harbour germs."



"Our poor friend, whom we can no longer consider sane, used to get into a sort of clothes-basket, which performed a kind of St. Vitus's dance."

"But it is a disinfectant, too," I said.

He laughed.

"By Jove, I wish you had reminded me of that first!" he said. "Well, good night!"

I always look back on that evening as the first on which I became aware that for poor Bertram Porter a cloud, a mental storm which should overlay the sky, was within view. For a while it remained on the horizon, for he was busy with his work, and devoted his energies in the main to making other people well, instead of keeping himself so. He did not, at any rate, at once give up the irritant poisons of daily life, but, on the other hand, the fact that he was liable to go into houses where there was neither sticking-plaster nor disinfectants made him careful to carry these about with him. It was not long after that we spent a few days in the country together, and, walking through a wood, I carelessly let a branch of bramble fly back against him, so that his hand was punctured by six or seven infinitesimal wounds. He

was not in the least annoyed with me, but he stopped at once and took from his pocket a little phial of disinfectant, and dabbed a drop on each of the punctures. Then, with his deft doctor's fingers, he cut seven minute squares of black plaster and covered the pricks with them. This was done almost automatically, for he continued all the time to talk about the atrocious golf he had played that morning. There was no gainsaying the atrocity of it, but I would cheerfully have assented that it was the most remarkable example of professional skill in an amateur that I had ever seen if I had known what lesson he was going to read from it.

"Of course, all games requiring delicacy of touch and accurate timing," he said, "are not what they call 'mere games' at all. They demand the most accurate adjustment between various nerves and muscles. The eye has to notice the exact spot a ball occupies, or, in the case of a moving ball or at lawn tennis, will occupy, a fraction of a second after it is seen, and the muscles of the arms have to act in unconscious obedience to the eye. The motor and sensory nerves have to synchronise, if you see what I mean."

He paused a moment and adjusted the last piece of plaster.

"There are various causes that may give rise to an imperfect synchronisation," he said, "so that one times the ball wrong, as I did once or twice this morning. It may arise from fatigue of the nerves, or fatigue of the muscles, or, again, an act of indigestion, so small that you are not conscious of it, may put the mechanism out of perfect order, or some inequality of circulation."

"It is mostly due to taking your eye off the ball," I said.

"Certainly. But why do you take your eye off the ball? Because the muscles that govern the movement of the eye are acting imperfectly, and because the muscles of the arms are slower to act than the eye knows, so that you have not actually struck the ball when your eye tells you that the stroke ought to have occurred."

It was clear that even the innocent game of golf was being made grist for the mill of health, and I tried to rescue it.

"I take my eye off it," I said, "merely because I am not attending, but thinking about something else. There is nothing so fatal as to try to reduce games to microbes and nerves. You shall eat at lunch to-day all that you know is most digestible, you shall rest afterwards, if you like, you shall convince yourself that your heart is acting normally, and yet your game will probably be below contempt. And the reason will be that you can't play golf. There is no reason why you should. I can't play it, either, but I am quite well."

He sighed.

"Still, there must be a reason," he said.

I have detailed this trivial conversation at length because it marked a stage in the development of poor Porter's disease, which here seemed to have invaded the realm of recreation, and to be no longer confined to his work. And very shortly after, the determining cause of his ruin came in the apparently cheerful fact that an aged and ailing aunt of his died, leaving him a fortune of a hundred thousand pounds. He instantly retired from his profession and devoted himself to what he called "original work." Money had given him leisure, which to some natures is the greatest blessing, but to most the greatest curse. To him it proved the most pungent of curses, for it made it possible for him to study the laws of health and life, not for the sake of alleviating disease and pain in others, but by concentrating his whole mind on himself.

He began by leaving London and settling in an odious villa outside Brighton, in order to enjoy a greater purity of air. This he learned about by careful analysis, and found that a sample of the Brighton atmosphere, even in the centre of the town, contained twenty per cent. fewer microbes than a corresponding specimen taken from Berkeley Square. This "ampler ether" he specially inhaled in bouts of deep breathing, and I have often come upon him, in a corner of the garden, with an expression of one about to burst, or else snorting like a steam-engine. Then he gave up alcohol altogether, and took to drinking sterilised milk with his meals. The sterilised milk led towards obesity, so he made a practice of running aimlessly about for an hour and a half before breakfast in order to counteract this. The running about led to exhaustion in the middle of the running, so he instituted a period of rest from eleven to twelve in a recumbent position, and a small refection of minced beef in a brown bread sandwich. Also, he cut off the use of tobacco, which led to a certain instability of the nerves, or so he supposed. But that was easily remedied by occasional doses of bromide of potassium. That, it must be understood, was only a temporary measure. He soon got not to miss his tobacco, and therefore abandoned the bromide. But I think he rather missed the bromide.



"He looked pained, and unplugged one ear."

Simultaneously the question of diet occupied him. It was rather an elaborate affair to cut off all alcohol, substitute milk, and then be obliged to run about in order to avoid the consequences of milk, so he took to some temperance and fizzy drink, which made him bilious, and corrected the biliousness by some sort of pill—I think podophyllin. Flesh foods of all kinds were, after a year or two, thrown overboard, and he lived mainly on brown bread, cheese, fruit, and nuts, which, after a prolonged trial, he settled were the best sort of food. Very soon he took to consulting a little table of food values, and, whether hungry or not, ate the same quantity at every meal. The quantity was weighed on a neat pair of scales which he put beside him on the festive board.

All this and much more of an intricate and complex *régime* was but the preliminary step of putting himself in as good a condition of health as possible in order to enable him

to do his work in the most efficient manner, and settle the question of microbes. Anything that could possibly excite him he also kept far from him, since excitement led to irregular action of the heart and sleeplessness at night. All games, therefore, including bridge, were barred, since one night he lay awake thinking of what would have happened if he had finessed his queen, and he would not even play golf. I had the pleasure of pointing out to him that, since now he was living a life of absolute salubrity, he would always hit the ball exactly in the manner he meant, and would go round any links in sixty or so, but he thought best not to make the experiment. Incidentally, also, he fell in love with a most delightful girl, but, as will be easily conjectured, he found her most disturbing to the nerves and circulation, and chased her from his emotions as if she had been a streptococcus. Bromide had to be called in again for a time, but he was soon himself again, and was now ready to begin work.

About two years later his house was struck by lightning, an invasion which he had not contemplated. This necessitated the erection of an elaborate system of lightning conductors, and a new dome-like roof to his house. The lightning conductors, four in number, soared high as masts separate from the house, so that the most powerful of flashes could not but be attracted to some one of these sublime spikes, and would thus be promptly earthed. Meanwhile, his apparatuses for the detection and destruction of microbes continued to arrive in large packing-cases, and the house may be said to have become a microscope. By degrees, as his work progressed, and he began to learn more of the insidious ways of microbes, it also became more and more uninhabitable, and himself more and more impossible. I was living near Brighton at the time, and there saw a good deal of him, and was constantly shocked to observe how ill he looked. His organs, he assured me, were all perfectly sound. He also assured me that he felt in supreme health, and we must suppose that the incessant worry about the possible invasion of his dwindling frame by some chance bacillus so preyed on his nerves as to produce the appearance of a man far gone in consumption. He grew thinner and thinner, but was delighted with his emaciation, since all adipose tissue, he informed me, was perfectly useless, except for purposes of warmth, and was merely a sort of cucumber frame or hothouse for the foe. So he obtained the necessary warmth by putting on extra thick sterilised underclothing, and heating the house till the head of the ordinary individual swam with dizziness. Then, gradually he became convinced that even the air of Brighton was not good enough for the lungs of the person who wished to be really healthy, and all windows were hermetically sealed, and the house supplied with oxygen by a chemical process. In every room was a pipe-fed apparatus which panted oxygen into the enfeebled air, and an oxygen gauge, so that, when the air was adequately vital, you could temporarily turn off the supply. If you forgot to do this, a sort of heady drunkenness, a fictitious exhilaration, seized the occupant; and more than once he and I, engaged on some discussion, have had to stagger from the house and lie down on the lawn outside, running the risk of harbouring Brighton microbes. Exercise in the open air was similarly abandoned, and our poor friend, whom we can no longer consider sane, used to get into a sort of clothes-basket, which, when he turned on an electric current, performed a kind of St. Vitus's dance, which gave those who sat in it all the benefits of horse exercise with no risk except that of being tipped on to the floor, where you fell on a well-stuffed and sterilised mattress. The bed linen was made of some vegetable product, and smelled faintly of carbolic, and in the morning, after a bath of sterilised water warmed to blood heat, Bertram Porter sprayed himself with a weak solution of Salol.

It was something, however, to learn from him that all these precautionary measures were temporary also, like the bromide. His plan was to render himself immune to the attacks of all hostile microbes, while diet and a copious consumption of the famous Bulgarian bacillus would guard him against the probability of auto-intoxication. When completely immune, his intention was to offer himself as a subject to the doctors, who regarded him as a crank, and let them inject typhoid and diphtheria and anything else they pleased. Naturally—this was the golden dream—all mankind, following his example, would, like him, stand beyond fear of every sort of disease, and live—he could not say how long they would live—but certainly a man of a hundred would still be in the vigour of his youth. But, to attain this end, it was necessary for him first of all to demonstrate this impregnability of his own person against all malignant microbes—in other words, he had to give his phagocytes omnivorous appetites, so that they would

instantly and greedily devour anything hostile submitted to their notice. Till then it was but the part of prudence to erect those temporary barricades in the shape of sterilised water and antiseptic sheets against their chance onslaughts. These were but the scaffold. When the impregnable house was finished, down the scaffold would come, and Bertram Porter would bathe in diphtheria and drink typhoid neat, and brush his hair with a comb impregnated with scarlet fever.

Till then there were no carpets in the house, for they harboured dust, and it seemed to me, sitting in a stiff and shiny chair, that the very sunbeams lacked the dancing motes that so gaily play there in a less barren air. That morning, I remember, Bertram Porter had his head completely shaved, because hair was a harbourer of microbes, and gave away a Persian kitten because it would go out of doors and no doubt pick up all sorts of infectious things. He had tried brushing it with carbolic powder, but there was no certainty of destroying all hostile life; also, the kitten showed a desire to lick the obnoxious stuff off its soft blue coat, and incurred a risk of carbolic poisoning. He sat opposite to me at a bare deal table, with his eye glued to his microscope, his ears stuffed with antiseptic wool, and his scalp gleaming, weird and white, in the moteless sunshine. He had told me that there were seventy-nine microbes which were hostile to existence, and when once a man was immune to them, there was really no reason why he should not consider himself immortal as long as he kept away from motor-cars.

"And do you propose to inoculate yourself with all those?" I said. "Is life really worth living if you are to have every disease under the sun, though only in modified form?"

He did not answer for a moment. Then he withdrew his eye from his microscope with a sigh.

"That was most interesting," he said. "A very weak solution of chlorine destroyed the common bacillus of typhoid in nine seconds. Inoculate myself with seventy-nine diseases, did you say? Certainly not. Some fifteen will be all that are necessary—the more virulent sorts. I went through the typhoid inoculation a few weeks ago. Dear me, I really wish you would let me do the same for you! It is just the injection of these few dead bacilli, and I stake my professional reputation that you will have no more than a day or two of malaise. Think of the risk you daily run of typhoid!"

I had to shout at him—he was plugged up with antiseptic wool—also shouting was suitable for emotional reasons.

"But that is just what I won't do!" I yelled. "I will not think of the risks I run. I would sooner die to-morrow than live a hundred years on your terms!"

He looked pained, and unplugged one ear.

"But you don't understand," he said. "By the time I am thirty-five I shall be immune from all known diseases, and have at least seventy years of secure vigour before me."

"Do you call yourself vigorous now?" I asked.

"I am in perfect health," he said, "and have been so ever since I began to exercise ordinary care in my mode of living. You, on the other hand, have had influenza twice in the last four years. Dear me, it is nearly lunch-time! I will have five minutes in the exerciser first."

"I would sooner be a Christian Scientist, my dear Porter, than I would be you," I said. "I may have had influenza, but I have had some fun."

By virtue of my blindness and unreasonableness, I was allowed proper food and drink at lunch, while he with meticulous care weighed out his nuts and beans. Just now he ate a good deal of fresh fruit, for the sake of some salt contained in it, and to-day, though the month was still early April, a small basket of cherries appeared at the table. I ate two or three, but they were perfectly tasteless, and Bertram Porter finished them, washing each in a glass of water and drying it afterwards.

"There, again, is one of the most elementary precautions," he said, "which I am sorry to see you neglect. The damp skins of fresh fruit are a regular grazing ground for microbes. These cherries must have come from the South, and who can tell through what tainted and infected air they may have passed? I saw, for instance, that there was cholera at Marseilles. It is highly probable that our cherries came from the Riviera and passed through the town."

"And you haven't inoculated yourself for cholera yet?" I asked. "How careless!"

"No, I am not sure that I should, even if cholera came to England. The experiments at present made have been far from reassuring. The bacillus is peculiarly virulent, and certainly at present I should not think of being inoculated. Won't you have any more cherries?"

He went on eating them, and, as he ate, launched out into one of his extraordinary disquisitions about the tumult and battle that goes on hourly within us. Tragic as I found this practice, his theories were always fascinating, and he became positively epic over these microscopic wars on which all health and life depend. He got carried away, too, himself in what he was saying, and finally, in complete absence of mind, drank the water in which he had so carefully washed his fruit. I pointed at the glass.

"I am so glad you are still inconsistent!" I said.

"Why, what have I done?"

"Only drunk the water in which you washed your cherries. You've got the microbes safe now, if ever there were any."

He laughed.

"Well, well," he said, "that was indeed careless. I suppose I ought to take an emetic, but even then there is no certainty of complete expulsion. Let us hope for the best."

* * * * *

I left soon after lunch, and, as I had work in town, did not expect to see Porter again for a week or two. As a matter of fact, I never saw him again, for within a fortnight he was dead of cholera.

LULLABY.

SLEEP, sleep, my dear!
The day is done, and night is here;
All little children, good and wise,
Lay down their heads and close their eyes.
They know, when mother is quite near,
They need not fear:
Sleep, sleep, my dear!

Sleep, sleep, my rose!
High in the dark a big lamp glows,
The little candles round about
Go twinkling, twinkling, in and out,
And every little blossom knows
It's time to close:
Sleep, sleep, my rose!

Sleep, sleep, my bird!
Within thy nest no noise is heard;
No other bird, on branch or bough,
Is safer or more loved than thou.
By mother's hand thy nest is stirred;
She sings this word:
"Sleep, sleep, my bird!"

AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON.

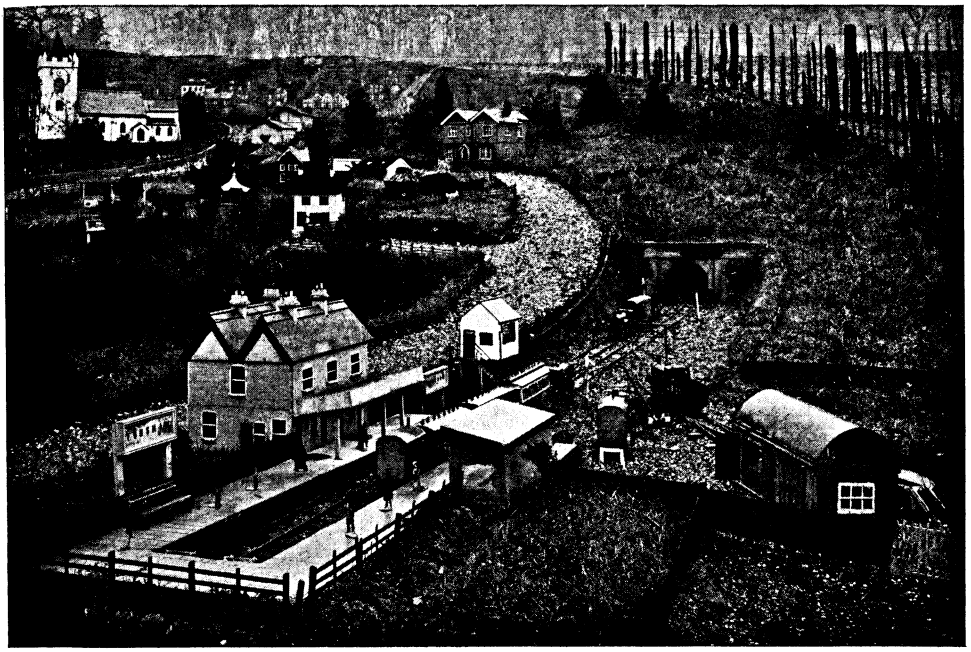


Photo by] [*Clarke & Hyde.*

MODEL OF "FONSHAM" RAILWAY STATION, CONSTRUCTED BY THE BOYS OF THE FARM SCHOOL, REDHILL, AS PART OF A REMARKABLE MODEL VILLAGE.

THE CULT OF THE MODEL RAILWAY.

BY PERCY COLLINS.

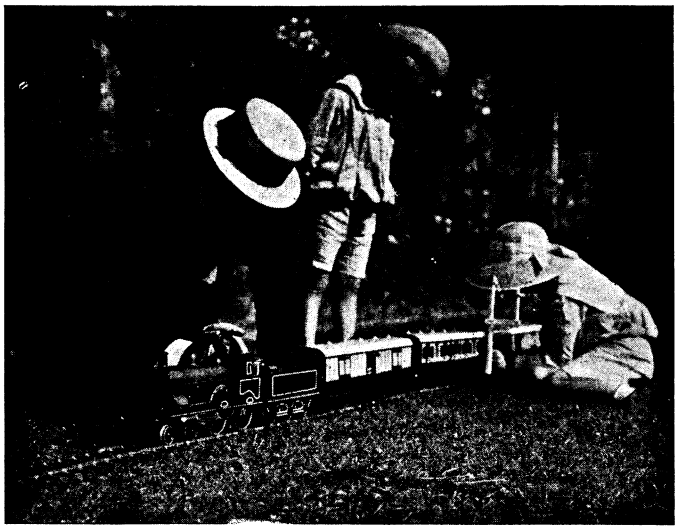
FROM the earliest period of locomotive engineering, inventors and experimenters have made use of models. Indeed, the very first locomotive of any kind to be made in England was a model—a quaint little engine, some 14 inches high by 19 inches long, with a simple expansion cylinder and a vibrating beam. It was invented and built by William Murdock, the well-known assistant of James Watt, in the year 1784, at Redruth, in Cornwall. Murdock was at that time engaged in erecting pump-engines for Messrs. Bolton & Watt, and he made his model in his spare time. In August, 1786, the firm's local agent wrote to Bolton & Watt, saying: "William Murdock desires me to inform you that he has made a small engine of ¾-inch diameter and 1½-inch stroke, that he has applied to a small carriage, which answers admirably."

Murdock's original model remained in possession of the inventor's family until 1883, in which year it was purchased by Messrs. Tangyes, who still preserve it.

As to the historic value of model railways from the standpoint of the student, there can be no question. From them he may learn, at a glance, the points of difference between this type of machine and that—between Stephenson's "Puffing Billy" and the brand-new locomotive of to-day, glowing with varnish and polished steel. Moreover, he may follow step by step the progress of the long line of inventors whose achievements have culminated in our modern railway systems. He may realise the reason for each improvement, and the manner of its discovery and introduction, far more pleasantly than would be the case if he were left to hunt up these records in old books and periodicals. Those who have examined the fascinating collection of modelled locomotives and railway accessories in the mechanical gallery of the South Kensington Museum cannot fail to appreciate their importance as records of the past, and

their inestimable value to the students from whose ranks will come the inventors of the future.

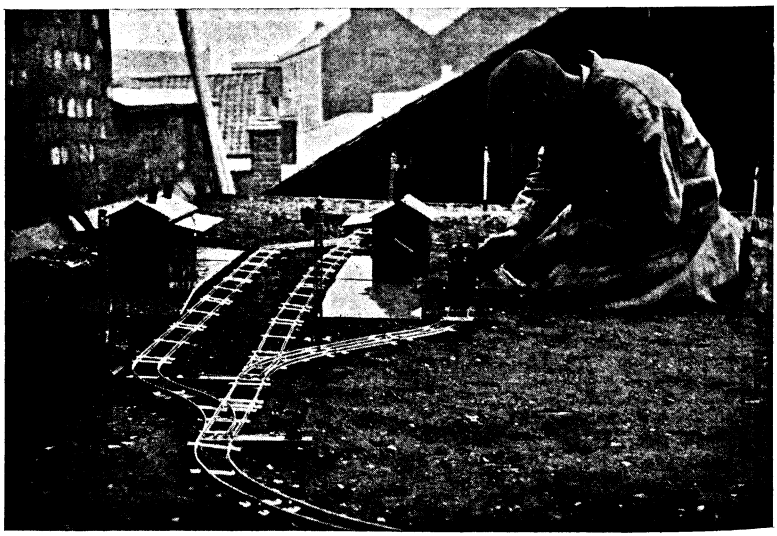
Since the date of Murdock's achievement, models have not ceased to play an important part in locomotive engineering. They have forestalled its triumphs, recorded the history of its successes, and made plain the reasons for many of its failures.



AMUSEMENT AND INSTRUCTION COMBINED.

An important event in the history of model railway engineering was the standardisation of gauges. It is obvious that considerations of space and pocket will always determine the size of the model selected by the individual enthusiast, but it is equally clear that a graded standard of sizes is desirable. Failure to recognise this fact led at first to endless confusion and annoyance. A locomotive and permanent way were purchased. Later a couple of coaches were obtained from a different source, only to prove just too big, or just too small, to run on the rails. Nowadays model railway work is based upon recognised standards which cannot be altered. There are four small gauges, ranging from $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and six large gauges, ranging from $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches to 15 inches. Models produced by the leading firms accommodate themselves to one or other of these gauges, while amateur workers, for their own convenience, adhere strictly to the same standards. In each gauge a multiplicity of accessories to scale — stations, signal-boxes, bridges, level crossings, and what not — are obtainable.

The $1\frac{1}{4}$-inch and $1\frac{3}{4}$-inch gauges are specially suitable for indoor use, the former being essentially a "table railway," sacred to clockwork, although a few steam locomotives of simple design have been made to this scale, which is, approximately, $\frac{9}{32}$ inch to the foot. The chief objection to very small steam locomotives, however, is their limited capacity, a run of only ten minutes being obtainable ere the boiler and lamp require replenishing; whereas a good clockwork locomotive, after accomplishing its run of 100 to 150 feet, can be re-wound in a few seconds and set going once more. Even a $1\frac{3}{4}$-inch gauge steam locomotive is not capable of more than sixteen or twenty



A SCIENTIFIC TOY ON THE HOUSE-TOP.

minutes continuous running.

If the novice aspires to an outdoor railway, and the superficial area at his disposal is limited, his choice will probably fall upon the 2-inch or the 2½-inch gauge. He may satisfy his cravings for correctness of detail, for, in these sizes, scale permanent way is obtainable, as well as exact reproductions in miniature of many well-known express locomotive types, either complete or in the form of rough castings. Incidentally it may be mentioned that model locomotives intended for outdoor work should preferably be "internally fired"—to make use of the technical term—for the maintenance of steam pressure with a naked spirit flame in a strong wind is a heart-breaking task.

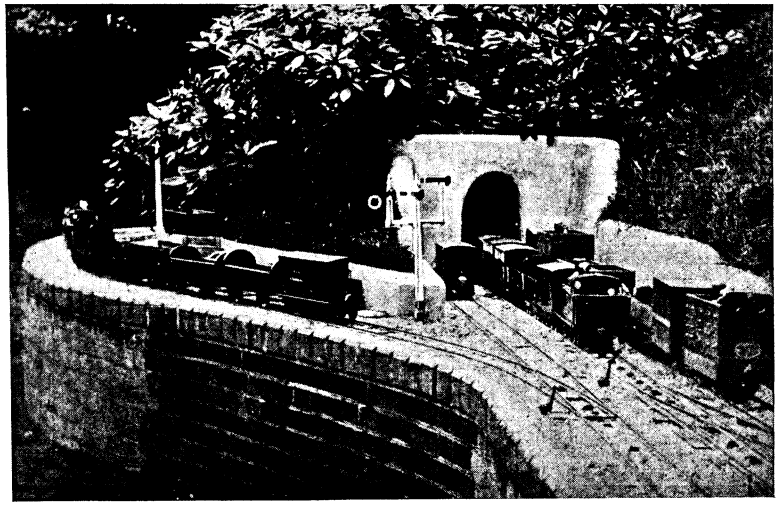


Photo by] [*J. Garvin.*

COLONEL HARVEY'S GARDEN RAILWAY.

The 3¼-inch and 3½-inch gauges are both popular where outdoor railways are concerned, each size having its own circle of votaries. Several elaborate systems in the latter gauge exist, the most notable being the "Great Holmwood Railway," the property of Colonel J. R. Harvey, by whose courtesy we are able to reproduce the photographs which appear with this article.

A brief description of this system will give the reader an idea of the possibilites for pleasurable occupation which a garden railway offers. The main line is a continuous single track, 350 feet long, which passes round a lawn. The permanent way is laid on a brick foundation, about 3 feet from the gravel walk, in order to obviate the necessity for stooping when attending to the models. The curves are all 14 feet radius, and there are gradients of 1 in 40, 1 in 60, and 1 in 70, the remainder of the line being level. Including sidings, there are some 600 feet of track, the laying of which necessitated the use of 7,200 chairs and 10,800 brass screws. There are three through loops, eight sidings, four principal stations, three bridges, two tunnels, an engine-shed and turn-table, and seven running-sheds, five being 18 feet, and two 8 feet long. There are two pits for firing up, one having the rails hinged to drop for convenience in

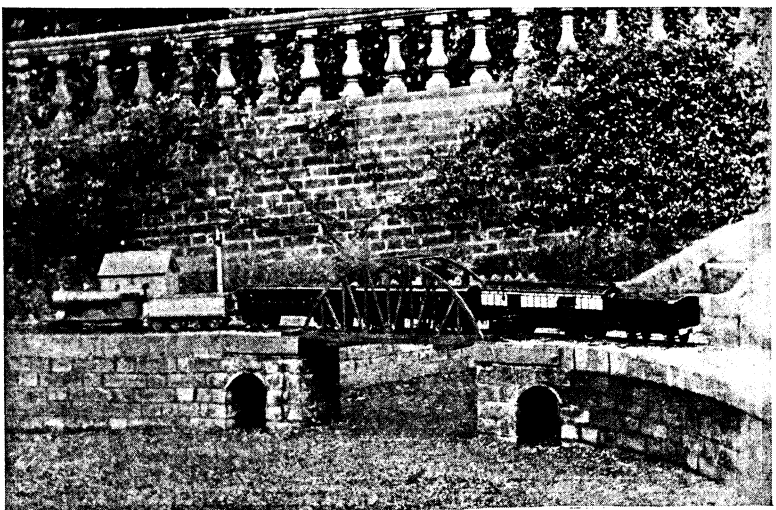


Photo by] [*J. Garvin.*

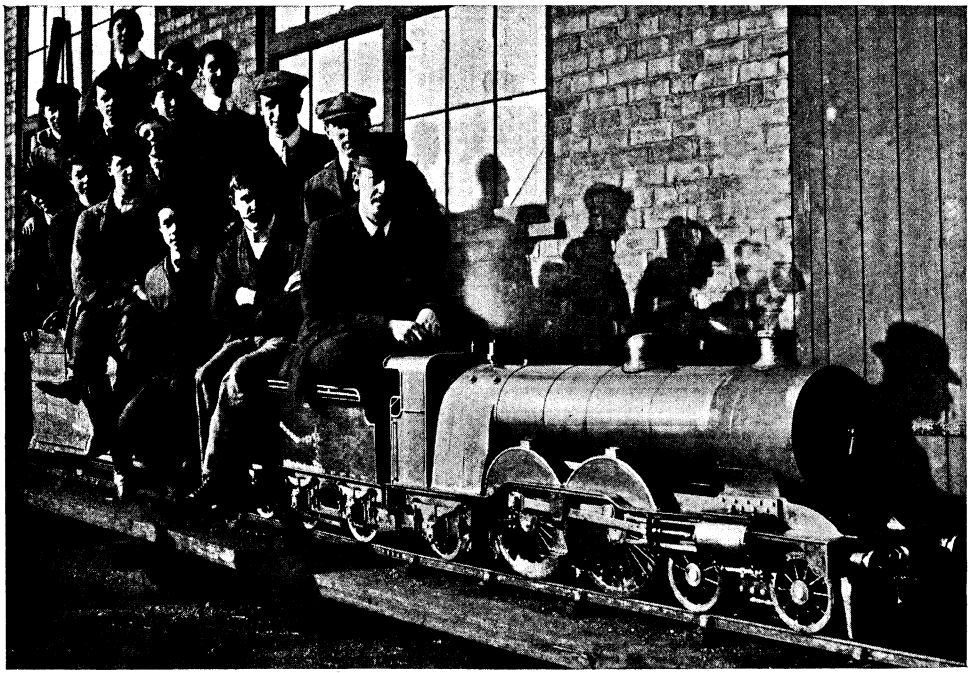
COLONEL HARVEY'S GARDEN RAILWAY.

getting at the burners of the locomotives, also a tank with distilled water-supply, and a complete system of signals, points, and foot-lights. A "third rail" has been laid down over the entire system, so that the whole line is available for electric traction. The permanent way was ballasted with "blue billy" obtained from the local gasworks—a wise precaution against the growth of weeds. All the bridges which span the garden paths are so constructed that they may easily be lifted up.

The steam locomotives of the "Great Holmwood Railway" comprise a four-wheel coupled outside cylinder bogie tender engine, a four-wheel coupled bogie ten-wheel tank-engine with outside cylinders, a four-wheel coupled inside cylinder tank-engine, and a four-wheel shunting engine. The electric models comprise a tube locomotive fitted with a special design of motor by Messrs. Marshall & Wood, a four-wheel coupled tank-engine fitted with an Avery motor, and a Great Northern Railway single express engine, equipped with a motor in the tender as well as in the engine.

The rolling-stock includes some forty odd vehicles, ranging from a platelayers' trolley to a mail coach and sleeping and dining saloons. There are open trucks, closed trucks, crane trucks, tipping contractors' wagons, goods and passenger "brakes," with types of various other vehicles, all being fitted with central buffers, which are found never to interlock when the train is passing round curves. A speed of 8 miles an hour has been attained on a measured length of this railway, while the locomotives are capable of pulling with ease a train of thirteen coaches.

The record-breaking 3½-inch gauge locomotive, however, was designed and built by Mr. G. S. Mitchell, of Sheffield. This tiny

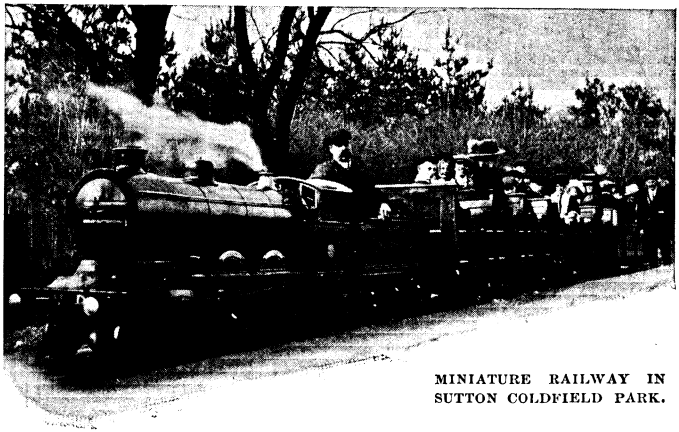


MODEL (2 INCHES TO FOOT) OF G.N.R. "ATLANTIC" NO. 1442 LOCOMOTIVE, UNDERGOING WORKS TEST.

engine is capable of pulling an adult passenger indefinitely, not merely of hauling a big load for a short distance. At present, its non-stop record is 3 miles, the water-supply having been handed to the driver in jugs as he passed by. The run was brought to an undignified conclusion when the driver-passenger overbalanced from his narrow perch—otherwise the locomotive might have been going still! The driving-wheels of this remarkable model have a diameter of only 3½ inches, and it has 1-inch bore cylinders.

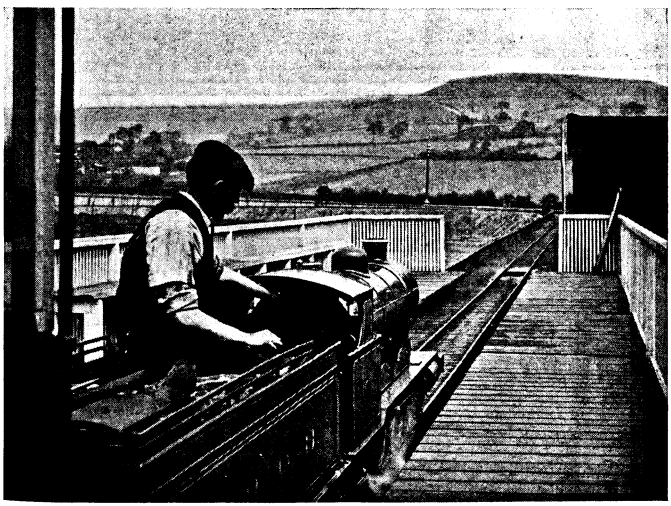
Mr. Mitchell's "Brook House Model Railway" is a noteworthy 7¼-inch gauge system, an "inner circle" being laid also,

with a 3½-inch gauge track, to provide for the running of the owner's smaller models. The length of the main line is 439 feet, of the inner line 330 feet, while there are also a connecting line of 62 feet, and an engine-shed line of 110 feet. Upon leaving the shed, the locomotive passes down a steep gradient into a cutting four feet deep, from which over 100 cartloads of earth were removed. It then enters the 25-yard-long tunnel, which is the chief engineering feature of the line, built, as it is, of brick throughout, on proper drums, with 14-inch side-walls and arch bricks for roof. The tunnel is properly drained, and the bank through which it passes consists of about 200 tons of earth. The line emerges near "South Junction," the branch for the "inner circle," which passes round an ornamental lake. A very perfect system of signalling has been instituted. Sixteen signals are in use, and all of them are duly lighted when the line is used after dark. There is a properly-equipped signal-box, and by obeying the ordinary laws of signalling, and by codes of flag-signals—red and green lamps at night—and engine whistles, the safe control of the line may be achieved without the interchange of a word between driver and signalman. The "Brook House Model Railway" locomotives comprise—in addition to the 3½-inch gauge tank-engine already mentioned



MINIATURE RAILWAY IN SUTTON COLDFIELD PARK.

—a 3½-inch gauge Great Northern Railway model, also a 7¼-inch gauge "Precursor" locomotive, built from designs by Mr. Greenly. All the engines are fired with a mixture of three parts coke and one part anthracite coal. The rolling-stock includes a large double bogie wagon and a ballast truck, as well as a 3½-inch gauge driving truck, with water and coal space, for use with the small locomotives.



THE MINIATURE PASSENGER RAILWAY IN THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS AND PARK AT HALIFAX.

The track covered is about a mile in length.

A few enthusiasts, with the necessary space and cash at their disposal, favour the 9½-inch gauge, with models made to a scale of 2 inches to the foot—that is, one-sixth full size. A photograph showing such an engine undergoing its "works test" is here reproduced. It is a scale model of the Great Northern Railway "Atlantic" locomotive No. 1442, which hauls the Royal train. When in full working trim, the model—the boiler of which is made of copper throughout, and fired with ordinary coal—weighs 950 lbs. In favourable circumstances, it will pull a load of 2 tons, and travel at a speed of 17 miles an hour. It may interest the reader to know that the cost of such a model, capable of pulling himself and his friends in specially-designed passenger trucks, would be about £300.

Very many model railway systems, both great and small, have come into being during the last decade; but considerations of space prevent us from dwelling upon their distinctive features. No account of model locomotive engineering work would be complete, however, without special reference to light or miniature railways, especially as they possess almost limitless possibilities for the development of home trade and industry. The gauge selected as the standard—15 inches—accommodates models built to the scale of 3 inches to the foot, or three-quarters actual size. The first railway of this gauge was installed on his Duffield Bank estate by Sir Percival Heywood, who is a recognised authority on the subject. His line is only exclusive of the various buildings and other paraphernalia. It connects Eaton Hall with Balderton Siding, on the Great Western main line, some four and a half miles distant, and is almost exclusively used for goods traffic, though the rolling-stock includes one passenger coach—an eight-wheeled carriage capable of accommodating sixteen persons—in which visitors to the Hall, including Royalty, occasionally travel. The trains on this railway carry, on an average, some 6,000 tons each year, and travel from 4,000 to 5,000 miles.

The original locomotive of the Eaton Hall Railway is known as "Katie." Her cost was £400, and she was designed and constructed by Sir Percival Heywood. More recently a

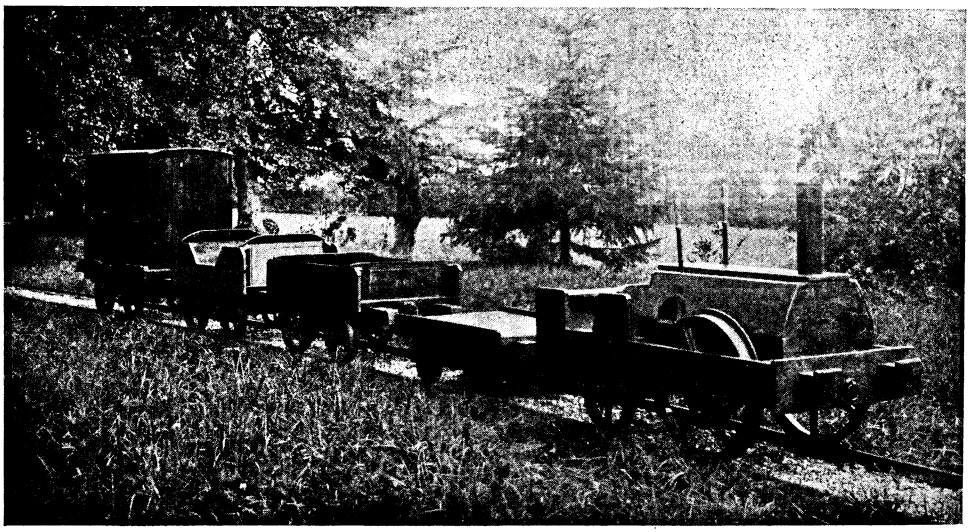


Photo by] [*G. B. Tunstall Moore.*

RAILWAY CONSTRUCTED ENTIRELY BY THE REV. J. E. PRESTON, OF JULIANSTOWN, DROGHEDA, IRELAND, IN THE VICARAGE GARDEN.

about one mile in length, including sidings, but it is a perfect railway in miniature, comprising six stations, three tunnels, two bridges, and a viaduct 90 feet long and 20 feet high. A system of interlocking signals and points is worked from two signal-boxes, which are in telephonic communication. The affairs of the railway are ordered just as in the case of a great main line. Punctuality is enforced, and experiments are constantly carried out with a view to the improvement of light railways in general.

Sir Percival Heywood also designed and constructed the famous Eaton Hall "baby" railway, which is the property of the Duke of Westminster. Roughly speaking, the line cost about £1,300 per mile to construct, locomotive of the "Atlantic" type, appropriately called the "Little Giant," was tried on the line. This engine was constructed by Messrs. Bassett-Lowke, and proved capable of hauling 12 tons on a level at 4 miles per hour, and 5 tons at 15 miles per hour up gradients of 1 in 100. With 2½ tons behind it on a falling gradient, it attained the enormous speed of 26½ miles per hour, equal to a scale speed of more than 100 miles per hour. In matters of detail, this engine and its duplicates represent the high-water mark of model engineering.

The Eaton Hall Railway is not, of course, required to prove itself financially profitable; but the 15-inch gauge is being exploited commercially at the present time. In November,

1904, a limited company, styled the Miniature Railways of Great Britain, was formed to operate tiny passenger systems. The first of these railways was built on the south shore at Blackpool. It met with immediate success, and has since been followed by similar railways in Sutton Coldfield Park, near Birmingham, the International Exhibition at Nancy, in France, and the Shepherd's Bush Exhibition, in London. More recently the company has laid down miniature railways in the Zoological Gardens and Park near Halifax, and in the grounds of the International Exhibition at Brussels. Among other notable private railways is that laid down by the Rev. J. E. Preston in his vicarage garden at Julianstown, Drogheda, Ireland. Mr. Preston has made with his own hands the sleepers, locomotive, carriages, points, and signals. He also prints and issues his own tickets. The gauge of the railway is 1 foot 9 inches, and consists of about five tons of light rails, fourteen pounds to the yard. Though it is "miniature," it is large enough to carry its constructor and his friends round the grounds.

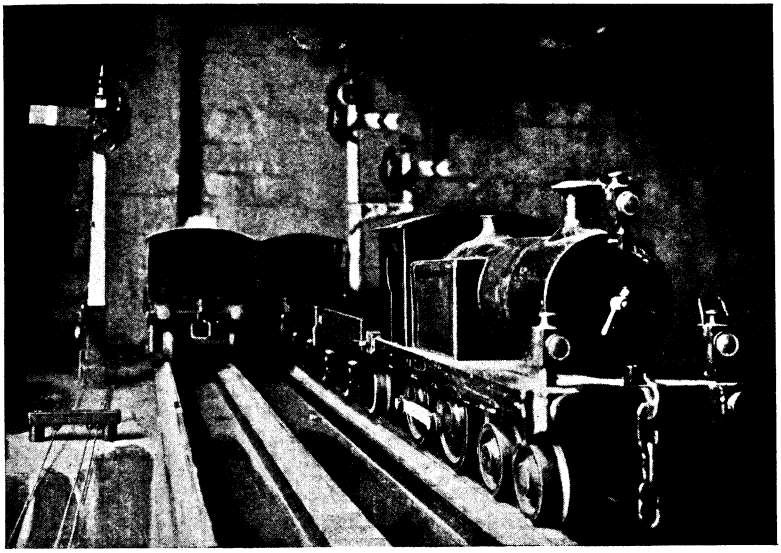


Photo by] [*Clarke & Hyde.*

MODELS USED TO TEACH STUDENTS AT THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY'S SIGNALLING SCHOOL.

Apart from the successes which these miniature railways have scored at pleasure resorts, no reasonable doubt can be entertained that, where the land is available, they would prove equally profitable for the conveyance of passengers and goods from railway stations to outlying districts. Permanent

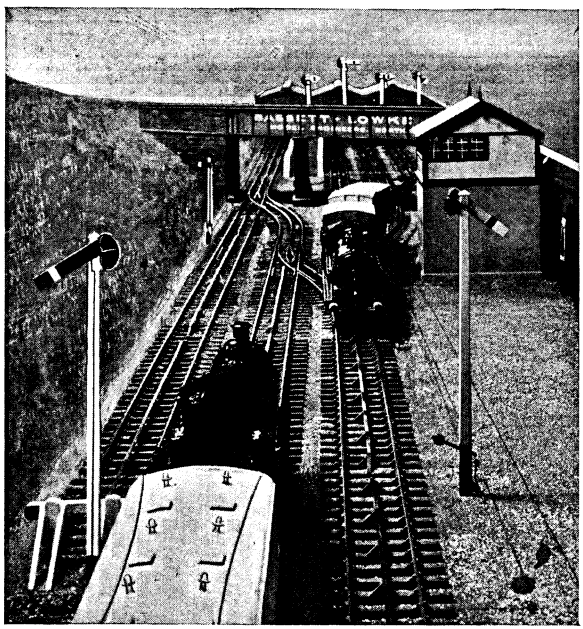


Photo by] [*Clarke & Hyde.*

STUDENTS AT THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY'S SCHOOL BEING TAUGHT THE USE OF "CATCH POINTS," WHICH ARE DESIGNED TO PROTECT A MAIN LINE FROM INTERSECTING SETS OF METALS.

way materials, which include steel rails—weighing 12 lbs. to the yard—fixed to steel corrugated sleepers by tips and dogs, all necessary fish-plates, bolts, nuts, etc., including bending, and four pairs of points, would cost from £350 to £375 per mile. To this must be added the cost of construction, which would vary according to the nature of the land over which the railway was laid. The approximate cost of an "Atlantic" type locomotive would be £325.

After taking this bird's-eye view of the remarkable developments which have now been reached in the modelling of every branch of railway mechanism and industry, it is curious to reflect how recent has been the growth of enthusiasm for this minute study and reproduction of railways in miniature form. That growth, one might almost say, has been coincident with the years of the present century.

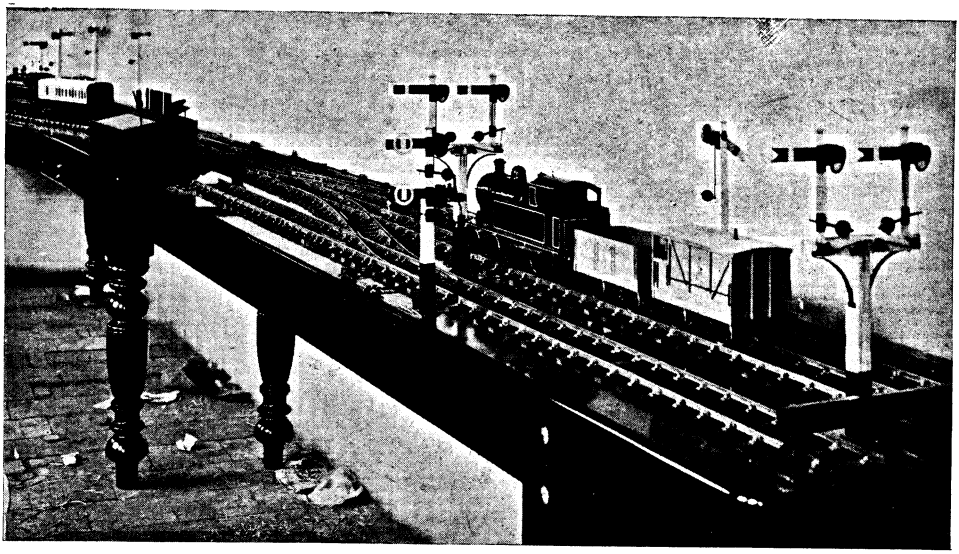


ELECTRICALLY DRIVEN MODEL RAILWAY CONSTRUCTED TO THE ORDER OF THE LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY, AND EXHIBITED AT THE FRANCO-BRITISH EXHIBITION.

Before that there were a few primitive toys, but gradually a number of beautiful models were made. The Society of Model Engineers—which is now an important body, with headquarters in London, and branches in Liverpool, Manchester, Cork, Dublin, and other towns—came into existence in the year 1898, and from the first many of its members have been industrious builders of model locomotives. But the results of their skill were, for the most part, more suitable for exhibition in glass cases than for actual use "under steam"; and the question of cost long remained a serious obstacle in the way of popularising model locomotives and railways.

In 1900, Mr. W. J. Bassett-Lowke, of Northampton, a young enthusiast with more than a spice of business acumen in his composition, conceived the idea that a model locomotive, bearing at least a superficial resemblance to its prototype, might be produced commercially at a reasonable price. He first designed a model of the London and North-Western Railway locomotive "Black Prince," and was able to put it on the market at a figure which secured for it immediate popularity. In this manner a long-latent craving was stimulated. Model engineering became, almost at once, a widespread hobby. A demand sprang up not only for model locomotives of various kinds and sizes, but for model rolling-stock, model permanent way and signals, and the countless accessories necessary for the equipment of a complete railway system. This demand Mr. Bassett-Lowke, now the managing director of a Company specially formed for the purpose, deliberately set himself to supply; and from that day forward popular enthusiasm for model railways has steadily increased.

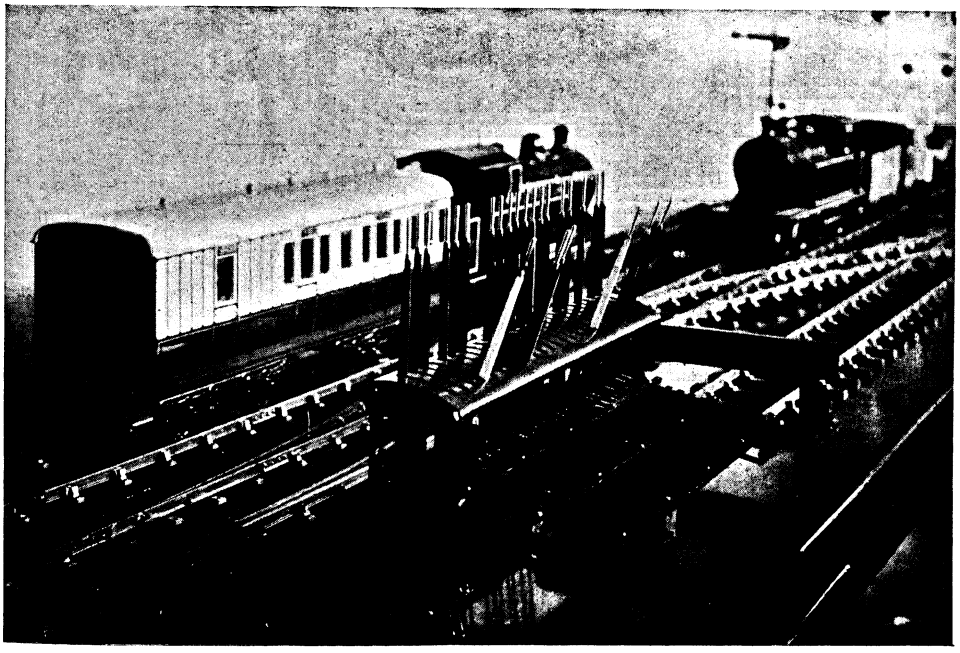
The reason for this is probably threefold. In the first place, a model railway is almost an ideal toy; it is at once a source of delight and education, while it provides limitless scope for the exercise of ingenuity and invention. Secondly, a model railway can always be extended and made more perfect, so that interest in the hobby, when once aroused, goes on increasing from year to year. Thirdly—and this is by no means an unimportant factor in accounting for the model railway vogue—the toy is not merely one for children, but is capable of interesting a whole family. Indeed, the pleasure derived from it by paterfamilias often rivals that evinced by his boys. Ocular evidence of the progress which has been made in model railway engineering is abundantly afforded by a



SIGNALLING INSTRUCTION SET CONSTRUCTED SPECIALLY FOR THE LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY.

visit to Messrs. Bassett-Lowke's London showroom, whence some of our illustrations are supplied.

Model railways and locomotives of all sizes have many important uses. It would be difficult, for instance, to overrate their value as an aid to education. Merely to handle and work a model engine insures for a youngster a basis of practical knowledge far in excess of that which can be gained from theoretical study alone, for the reason that the essentials of a machine, or the application of a mechanical combination, are much more readily grasped from a model than from a multitude of working drawings.



ANOTHER VIEW OF SIGNAL INSTRUCTION SET RECENTLY MADE FOR THE LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY.

It is a well-known fact that railway companies make use of models for the purpose of instructing their drivers and firemen in the mechanism of the locomotive. In the case of the Great Eastern Company, for instance, a model representing approximately the motion of a locomotive is kept at every principal depôt. Comparatively few people are aware, however, that the most go-ahead companies now possess model railways, completely equipped, which are used to illustrate instructions in signalling. We reproduce a photograph showing a class at the Great Western Railway Company's school learning the use of "catch points." These are often placed on an up-gradient, so that, should part of a train become detached through the breaking of couplings, it would simply run off the metals at the "catch points," instead of colliding with the next up-coming train. In this way the seriousness of an accident would be minimised.

The most recent signalling-instruction model was made to the order of the London and North-Western Railway. The permanent way (2½-inch gauge) is laid upon a table 20 feet long by 3 feet wide. It consists of a double-line junction, with cross-over and refuge sidings. All the points and signals are worked from the model locking-frame (representing the signal cabin), which is made exactly to a scale of ¾ inch to a foot. All the signal wires, point rods, lock bars, etc., are to scale. Two trains are provided, one consisting of a composite passenger coach, the other of one goods wagon and a "brake." The two locomotives resemble the company's tank-engines, and are similar to one another. Such a set as this enables the instructor to emphasise the point which he desires to make; moreover, a student may at any time be called upon to work out a signalling problem in a practical manner.

Last year, in the month of May, there was exhibited, at the Westminster Palace Hotel, a working model locomotive which may, perhaps, be regarded as the latest addition to this long succession. This model was built for His Excellency M. Peter Schilowsky, Governor of Kostroma, and was used to demonstrate the practicability of the gyroscopic mono-rail train recently patented by him. The engine was absolutely self-contained and self-actuating, and in itself possessed no special apparatus, being kept upright by an attachment to a tender which carried a stabilising gyrostat.

Quite recently the great railway companies have recognised that model railways may be employed as a subtle form of advertisement. He who will not pause for a moment to admire a justly-proportioned working model is surely *blasé* beyond recall! The London and North-Western Company first made use of a model railway for this purpose at the Franco-British Exhibition, and many readers will doubtless remember the crowds of visitors, young and old alike, who stood each day to watch the passage of the tiny trains. A similar model was made for the East Coast Railways, the chief stations of the three Companies—namely, King's Cross (G.N.R.), York (N.E.R.), and Edinburgh (N.B.R.)—being reproduced in miniature. Unfortunately, this model was completely destroyed by fire in the British Section of the Brussels Exhibition. The latest model of this kind was constructed to the order of the Canadian Pacific Railway, for exhibition at Brussels. In certain respects, this model is unique, as it provides a realistic representation of the various features of a railway, on the smallest scale—*viz.*, 1¼-inch gauge. It comprises two stations, to wit, "Halifax" and "Vancouver," and there are also a two-coach train and two electrically-controlled locomotives, which are made to carry out intricate evolutions.

These electrically-controlled locomotives are quite the latest novelty in the model railway world. Although, to the casual observer, they exactly resemble the ordinary steam-driven model, they are really equipped with a specially-designed motor, cunningly concealed within the boiler barrel. Thus, by adopting the well-known "third rail" system, the speed of the models may be controlled from a central point. Moreover, they may be reversed—made to run back to their starting-point—at any moment, no matter how far they may be from the operator of the line.

Incidentally, the fact that working models are being used for charitable purposes is not without interest. The Railway Servants' Orphanage, for example, derives no inconsiderable benefit from a model of a London and North-Western engine which is exhibited in a glass case at Euston Station. A penny placed in a slot sets the model in rapid motion. Another case contains a splendid reproduction to scale of a six-wheel bogie passenger coach, which—also in response to a penny—is lighted throughout by electricity in the orthodox manner. Similar models are now to be seen at most of our large railway stations, both metropolitan and provincial.

FROM "THE PLUME OF FEATHERS."

By EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

IV. THE FUR-LINED COAT.

THE wind was shouting in the chimney like a drunken man, and the rain coming down in sheets o' water. A proper fierce March night, in fact—winter dying hard, and scarce a sign of spring save where the blade was green in the fields, and the rooks terrible busy about their nests.

So bad was the night that not many had got to "The Plume"; but I was there in my usual corner, because the elements be nought to me, and Butt was also there, and Peter Gurney, the farrier. Sam Bonus looked in for a dram, on his way back from Bovey, but he didn't bide, being wet home to the skin; and Peter, he was soon gone, too, so that left only me—Tom Turtle—and Moses Butt, in one of his most silent moods; and, of course, Johnny Rowland behind the bar.

Never did I know a quieter evening in company, though 'twas noisy enough outside, and I began to fear us weren't to have much fun nor change of ideas, when the door was opened, and who should come in but old Uncle Tom Cobleigh! The ancient man was blown through the ope-way like a leaf out of the tempest, and there he stood, smiling and gay and light-hearted as ever, wi' his face so red as a rose, and the water dripping off the hard brim of his old top-hat.

"My stars, Uncle!" cries Rowland. "What the mischief be you doing out 'pon such a night as this? You'll catch your death one of these days if you ban't more careful!"

"And you ninety, if you're an hour, Uncle!" I said. "'Tis running in the face of Providence, and a most dangerous thing."

Butt spoke not, but he shifted from the nook nighest the fire, and let Uncle dry hisself. The old man threw off his "Spencer" coat, and Rowland sent it in the kitchen to be wiped and dried for him; then his beaver was hung afore the fire, where it quickly sent up a column of steam, and he put his withered legs to the blaze, and fetched out his pipe and had a good drop of hot spirits and water. He was soon crowing and happy as a bird.

"I couldn't bide home," he said. "I'm a restless old blade at best, and what with quarter day so near again, and my grandson got to go in hospital, and the elections for Parliament coming on, and one thing and another, I felt I must have a bit of company to-night, weather or no weather. And, by good chance, I find you here, Moses, so you can see me home. I'm such a light weight and so gone in the hams, along of my great age, that this here tearing wind do send me across the road all ends up, like a sparrow."

Uncle was in great form, and laughed at our fears for him.

"My generation be hard as oaks," he said, "and we live and die same as them. I may see three figures so like as not, for when a man weathers three score and ten, and be sweet as a nut still, and sound at the kernel, then there's nought he can't stand against but old age. Diseases pass me by like water running down the river. I'm seasoned against all mortal ills, and nought will put me down but Time."

"You was harder brought up than us men of a later generation," I said. "Though I can call to mind barley bread myself—a thing the people to-day would pull a mighty long face at."

"'Twas all that ever I got to eat till near half a century old," declared Uncle Cobleigh. "My faither had eight childer, and worked fifteen years for seven shillings and sixpence a week. For Matthew Reddicliffe did he work—him as had Walna Farm in them old days—a man as came down in the world a good bit before his end."

"I mind his sons," said Johnny Rowland. "Three sons he had, and one's still living."

"That was the man, and me and my brothers and sisters was all born in a house at Walna. 'House,' I call it, but you wouldn't stable your hoss in such a cabin

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nowadays. Barley bread and barley dumplings, and barley broth wi' a tater in it sometimes for a feast day. Wheat? Wheat was two pound a bushel then; but the farmer's man got his barley for ten shilling a bushel. They was talking of the cannon balls in the Boer War back at my neighbours t'other evening, and I said 'Cannon balls?' I said. 'Tis a cruel pity,' I said, 'as when us went to war wi' they Boers that Lord Buller didn't take out a brave lot of our barley dumplings, for they'd slay a man and scat him to shivers at a mile, so hard was they!' But teeth was ivory in them days, and us boys could chew up barley dumplings and get the good of 'em, though I doubt if the childer as be born now could stand 'em. We'm getting that soft of late years that we shall think barley ban't good enough for our pigs, let alone our boys and girls, afore long."

"And the cider in them days was more like vinegar than apple juice," said Rowland. "But now the young youths cry out for it to be sweet. 'Tis a sign of the times. The labourers drink tea for choice harvesting now."

"Tea! Heaven bless 'e!" cried Uncle. "Why, in my time, tea was so dear as baccy. Fourpence an ounce we had to pay, and, of course, at that fearsome price, 'twas only a thing for weddings and funerals. Organy tea was all us ever had, and then only if us was ill and wanted a bit of care."

"To think of how the world have changed!" I said. "Why, you can buy tea at fivepence a quarter of a pound, and 'tis tea as you can swear to—quite a lot of taste to it."

"Ess," continued Uncle. "I began life when I was seven year old, frighting rooks and driving bullocks. At ten I went to regular service, and I only left Farmer Coole, over to Honeybag Tor, three years agone. That's eighty-two year I worked out of ninety-two all told!"

"The people did ought to hear tell about it, Uncle," said Butt. "In my opinion, us ought to take up a collection for 'e. I dare say we might get together ten sovereigns by it, at the least."

"I should be terrible pleased if it happened," said Uncle, because there weren't any false pride about him. "But it isn't likely to. In fact, us ancient blids ban't wanted now. I'm sure there's a good few in this place as be jealous of my years, and think I'm having too much luck to live so long, let alone a subscription."

We told him he was much mistaken, because us all felt very proud of the aged man; and then Butt spoke again.

"I mind when David Reddicliffe died," he said—"that was one of Farmer Reddicliffe's sons. Three sons he had, and the eldest was called Weston, and the second was Andrew, and the third was David. And David was a gentle, kindly creature, but the others were hard, own-self men, like their father. And Andrew still lives, but t'others be gone a good while."

He stopped, and Rowland spoke.

"I can tell 'e a fine story about them three men," he said. "But what is it you mind that fell out when David died?"

"About his wife," answered Moses Butt. "She was a nipper, hard as nails, honest and straight, but no softness—just a machine as never got out of order and never changed, and never went fast nor slow, but always just right. 'Twas after David had been doomed by doctor, and his lady faced it, and took all the proper steps with her usual cleverness and far-reaching thought. Twenty-four hours before he drew his last breath, David, lying by the kitchen fire to catch warmth, seed a very fine leg of boiled pork, as he got sight of through the larder door; and he had just strength to whisper to his darter that he'd dearly like a mouthful of it. But the missis, who was busy tidying the parlour at the moment, sent back answer that it couldn't be. 'I'm terrible sorry,' she said, 'but tell faither 'tis for the funeral.'"

Johnny shook his head at this tale. "No, no, Moses, that won't do. I never will believe it. Not a woman born could be so strong as that; 'twould take a heart of flint, for sartain. And now hear me, though I'd sooner far that Turtle here would tell about it, for I've got a tissick in my chest, caught at the ploughing matches, and my voice have gone so hoarse as a crow's."

"'Twill do you good to tell it," I answered, "and be an excuse for taking a drop of rum and honey, which you be very fond of. You sup some of that, and your tubes will get so clear as a bell."

So Johnny mixed hisself a brew and began.

"When Matthew Reddicliffe died, 'twas found he hadn't left a will. He'd gone down the hill a good bit in his old age, after leaving Walna Farm, and he spent his money on himself; but 'twas always supposed that he meant to leave his goods—what was left of 'em—to his son David. T'others he hated,

and they hadn't no use for him; but David was tender to the last with the old man, and I've no doubt that Matthew meant to make a will, and he may even have thought he had done so, for he was silly and tootlish, and lost his memory towards the end. However, when his youngest son had closed his eyes, and things were looked into, 'twas found that the old chap had just lived very clever to the limit of his resources, and gone after he'd used up the last shot in the locker. And 'twas also found that he hadn't left no will, after all.

"Then, when that got to be knowed, his other sons was down on the cottage like a pair of kris-hawks, and Weston, the eldest, gave out as everything was his. But Andrew, the second one—him that's still living—he wouldn't stand that; and David had his say, too. So, finally, after a lot of snapping and snarling on the part of Andrew and Weston, the brothers decided as they'd draw lots for the furniture and effects. Of course, there wasn't anything like what old Matthew had had in his palmy days, for, after his wife died, he'd sold all the best of his goods, and latterly was content to live in a small cottage to Widecombe, with a woman to come in daily and do the chores and cook his bit of food, and his son David to look after him.

"There was a scandal or two over his sticks, poor though they were, and I heard how one night, on the quiet, two days before the lot-drawing, Andrew Reddicliffe came to the empty cottage with his hand-bag, just to pick over a few spoons and forks and such-like unbeknown to his brothers. He thought, you see, to smuggle off the best of the stuff on the quiet; but Weston Reddicliffe was built on the same pattern, and just as Andrew sneaked up to the door in the moonlight, bag in hand, who should he see climbing out of the side window but his brother! And Weston had a pretty full bag, too.

"I'd have give a Bank Holiday's takings to hear the row between them two knaves, but I got some of it afterwards from Andrew's missis. 'Twas a thief set to catch a thief, and neither could come it over the other. 'What be you up to, then?' cries out Andrew. And Weston faces him and says: 'Much the same as you, by the look of it, and first come first served in a matter of this sort.' But Andrew wouldn't have that, you may be sure. He was the bigger and the stronger man, and though Weston offered him share and share, his dander rose up at the game t'other had tried to play, and he made Weston turn out his bag and put everything back where he'd took it from. The language was crooked and various, I'll warrant; and then they seed each other off the premises, for they only feared themselves, because David Reddicliffe, though poor as a coot, was a different sort of chap, and straight in all his dealings.

"Afore the lot-drawing, them fine fellows was in and out of the house at all hours, watching each other; and then Weston had a bit of luck, and got in twenty minutes all alone. 'Twas on that occasion he come across his father's fur-lined coat, and stared with great amazement, no doubt, because, though he knew the dead man had been spending his money on himself very free and easy towards the end, he never dreamed as the old chap would so far forget his station and means as to go and buy a masterpiece of a coat like this. 'Twas of good stout cloth, reaching to the knee, and 'twas lined with bright fur, deep and thick and so red as a squirrel. The fur turned back over the collar and cuffs, and made a terrible fine appearance. 'Twas a regular gentleman's coat, in fact—about the last thing old Matthew had invested in—thinking, no doubt, that such an amazing garment would keep life in his body for another winter at least. But he never had a chance to try, for the coat was flame-new, and had not been worn by mortal man. And Weston reckoned that if he couldn't come by it and keep it unbeknownst to his brothers, he was a bigger fool than he thought himself. His mind was whetted to move pretty quick, and he hatched his plot on the instant. He couldn't take the treasure away, because he was as like as not to meet Andrew in the street, so he just fetched out the coat from the cupboard where he found it, and slipped it into the worst piece of furniture in the house—an old, tumbledown chest o' drawers, not worth more'n half-a-crown for firewood. And when his brothers arrived to arrange about the lot-drawing and put down all the things, Weston, he said, casual like, that he'd take the old chest of drawers, because, though quite worthless, 'twould be useful to his wife for the maiden's bedroom; and he proposed that Andrew and David should each choose a trifle afore the draw to make up for it. And as Andrew had been through the old chest the day before, he didn't suspect; and, of course, David didn't suspect neither, not being that sort of man.

"And then they went through everything, down to the dead man's pattens and

tobacco-pipes and his set of false teeth. The lots was all most carefully marked out and divided up as small as could be, so that all should have a chance; but old Matthew's spoons and forks—a dozen and a half, and several silver—went in one lot, and his watch and seals went in one lot, and, of course, things like his 'grandfather' clock and famous copper warming-pan and old oak corn-bin, said to be worth five pounds, and such-like, was all in separate lots. The jimcracks and joanies—chimney ornaments and such-like—was of little worth, and not a few were broke at that, so they were all lumped in together; and a pair of very brave candlesticks, with cut-glass droppers round 'em, had been the joy of Mrs. Reddicliffe's life, and they was thought by the two brothers to be worth a pound to anybody. So they went in a separate lot.

"The night afore the draw, Weston Reddicliffe dropped in at the constabulary office and said: 'I'll be glad, Mr. Inspector, if you'll keep your eye on my late father's cottage till to-morrow, because, though not wishful to say anything against anybody, yet there's strong temptations around, and 'twill be better if you take special charge of the place, for fear of accidents.' And the policeman, he said: 'Funny you should come about this, Mr. Reddicliffe, because your brother, Mr. Andrew, he's been at me a'ready on the same errand. You need have no fear,' he said, 'for I've told one of my chaps 'pon that beat to pay special attention to your father's cottage, and see as no harm overtakes it. And 'tis a pity, I'm sure,' adds the policeman, who was a superior man, and didn't care a button for either of the rogues—'tis a pity, I'm sure, that you didn't skin your father afore you buried him! He was old and tough, and might have stood you in five bob at the tanner's!'

"But Weston turned wroth at this, and threatened to report the man, and went his way with all his heckles up.

"Then came the hour of the draw, and that poor jolterhead of a David would very like have been kindiddled out of his rights altogether by 'em; but his wife was just the woman for a party like that, and he knew it, and he begged as she'd kindly come to the drawing. And she said: 'Did you think I was going to let you go and be choused by them two hungry tigers all by yourself? You ought to know me better.'

"So she went along with David, and his brothers, very well knowing her ways, and that she could see through a brick wall further than most men, let alone women, weren't none too pleased to find her come. They grumbled a bit, and pointed out as they hadn't brought their wives, whereupon David's woman axed 'em point-blank what was the objection to her watching the lottery; and, under the glint of her eyes and afore her rat-trap mouth, they was silent, and couldn't find no honest answer. 'Twas the cleverest thing ever that mumphead, David, did when he got you,' says Andrew savage-like under his breath to her. And she answered out loud: 'Sorry as I can't return the compliment, Andrew Reddicliffe, for your Mary ban't exactly the pride and joy of your heart, by all accounts, and we all know that she have often wished her cake was dough again.' He scowled at that, because his wife hated the ground he walked on; and, in fact, she bolted not six months after them words were spoken, and went to Canada with Billy Hawke, the butcher.

"Then the drawing began, and it must have been a sight for sore eyes. Because that jolterhead of a David couldn't make a mistake, and pretty near every time he took a dip, he fetched out something worth having, whereas t'others couldn't do right. And Mrs. David sat alongside of the hat they drawed out of, sharp as a judge, and she took her husband's lots from his hand and wouldn't give 'em up no more.

"'Guy Fawkes and angels!' shouts Weston, after David had got the copper warming-pan and the 'grandfather' clock in two successive draws, 'the Dowl's in this! Here, give me the hat!' And he took it and gived it a good rake round and a fierce shake. And one piece of paper hopped out, and Weston put his foot on it like lightning. But Mrs. David had seen, and called his attention to it.

"'There's a lot jumped out and got under your foot, Weston Reddicliffe,' she said; and he swore 'twasn't so, but had to move his boot, and there 'twas. He cussed proper when it turned out to be the candlesticks with the crystal droppers; but, of course, the lot went back in the hat. Then Andrew, he drew a cargo of old tobacco-tins and mouse-traps and rubbish like that, and Weston, he got a meat-safe with one side out, and a worm-eaten chair, all covered with grease where his father's head did used to rub it. And David went gaily on, and drew the oak corn-bin and a new table-cloth, and a very fine stuffed cock-pheasant in a glass case.



"'Whatever do you make of this, my dear?'"

"For a bit the luck turned after that, and t'others did better. Weston got a tester bed with hangings, and Andrew drew six new runner towels and an old gun worth fifteen shillings, while David drew some of his father's boots and linen that was good for nought; but the vases was still left, and a ring what had belonged to the dead man's wife. 'Twas thought he'd sold it, but it turned up with some other trinkrums not worth anything. But the ring had a proper precious stone in it, of a pale forget-me-not colour, called a turkwise, and watchmaker Nelson had seen it and offered twelve shilling for it; and knowing watchmaker Nelson, the brothers didn't doubt but what the ring was worth gold.

"'Twas then, by an unlucky accident, as it looked, that a neighbour ran in with bad news for Mrs. David. She never had but one little boy, and the woman from next door called in haste to say there was a sad yowling coming from the cottage of the David Reddicliffes, where the boy of eight year old had been left alone.

"'It sounds as if he'd cut hisself or falled in the fire,' said the breathless woman, 'and I couldn't get in 'cause you'd locked up.' Then, of course, Mrs. David went away so quick as she was able, and her husband ran to the door with her.

"'You go back,' she said. 'Quick—quick, or them hookem snivey rogues will get the vases and the ring while your back be turned! I lay the child's all right, and if he's all wrong, you can't do no good by coming with me.'

"So off she ran, with the lots that had been drawed by David in her pocket; and she found her young hopeful had cut his finger to the bone, but weren't much the worse; and David, he went back to the drawing.

"But during the few moments his back was turned, his brothers hadn't been idle. You see, they felt that Fate had hit 'em hard enough, and they saw no harm in being upsides with David, so far as possible, over the remaining lots. There was but half a dozen or so left, and they nipped out the ring and the vases with crystal droppers, and each took one. Then, when all was over, David wondered where the treasures was got to; and Weston, he says: 'Why, my dear man, I drawed the ring an hour ago!' And Andrew said: 'And I drawed the vases just after they tumbled out of my hat, and your wife put 'em back!'

"So there 'twas; and David had to be content with the last lot, which was little more than a few mugs and some cracked chiney, as used to stand along the parlour mantel-shelf.

"There ended the drawing, but the adventures weren't over for Weston, nor yet for David. The youngest son's good luck held to him; and though his brothers had palmed off the old crocks on him, and kept the ring and the vases for themselves, it turned out the ring weren't worth but a few shilling more than Nelson offered; so Mrs. Weston kept that, and lost it a week after, on washing-day. And as for the vases, for all their glitter and glory, the bitter truth about them was that they weren't worth a shilling apiece. In fact, you might say they chaps had broke the Eighth Commandment for nought. And then a visitor to Widecombe called in on Mrs. David for a bottle of lemonade, which she sold and advertised on a board to catch thirsty travellers. The gentleman proved to be well skilled in cloam, and he actually offered her five-and-thirty shillings for a blue tea-pot with a chip out of the spout. Of course, 'twas one of the things David had got in the lottery that his brothers had fobbed off on him. And Mrs. David didn't haggle, as a common sort of woman might have done, but took the man's money on the instant, and handed over the teapot in a bit of brown paper afore he'd time to change his mind.

"And as for Weston and the coat, that tale wasn't all told, neither; for, next to getting the coat, he had to think upon how to get its value. Of course, he couldn't say nothing about it in public, and his inclination made him want to sell, and his pride made him want to wear. And his pride won the day; so, a little after, when the first snow fell, out came Weston Reddicliffe in the coat, to the wonderment of all men. He passed it off lightly, and said as his wife had made him buy it to take care of himself in the winter months. And some simple people believed him, and wondered how he'd got to be so rich all of a sudden; and the greater number didn't believe him, and puzzled to know how he'd come by such a fine garment, anyway. But Providence have a trick of getting back its own sooner or late, and now a funny thing happened.

"There come to Widecombe a letter for Mr. Matthew Reddicliffe, and postman, knowing that David was the man to look after his father's affairs, took it to him. He opened it, and found 'twas a bill for

seven pound ten shillings—the price of a fur-lined coat as the old man had bought down to Newton Abbot a month afore he died.

"'My stars!' says David to his lady, all in a mizmaze. 'Whatever do you make of this, my dear?'

"They say 'tis the only time that Mrs. David was ever heard to laugh out loud in her life. But laugh she did.

"'You can put that in the letter-box where your fine brother Weston lives,' she said. 'You needn't worry about it. 'Tis a stickle path the rogue goes on, and we'll live to see him at the bottom yet. He stole thicky coat, and now, thank God, he've got to screw out seven pound ten from somewheres, and I'd give a year of my life to hear him talking about it!'

"But she didn't hear him, and more didn't anybody else, excepting his wife, who tried to keep the secret. He got the bill, and, what's more, he paid. 'Twas a choice between that and being took to the county court; and, even so, he had to face the people, for though David never said nothing, for the honour of the family, Mrs. David hadn't no feeling on that score, and she gave the ugly truth a pretty good send-off, I believe.

"'Twas one of those cases where vartue was rewarded, and wickedness punished on the spot—a most unusual thing to hap in real life."

THE MESSAGE.

THE clouds were dun and the moor was slate,
The birds were sad and still,
A mist on the sombre hill-top sate;
But still I stood by the spinney gate,
For a mystical something bade me wait,
Though my heart was heavy and chill.

A sun-shaft shot through a cloudy chink,
And a thrill throbbed through the wood.
A tit, in a trice, trilled "Tinker-tink-tink!"
A robin retorted with "Link-bob-o-link!"
While I hurried home for paper and ink,
For the three of us understood—

Understood that the gleam through the broken grey
Was a message to each dull heart
That one we'd been looking for day after day
Was coming towards us. Yes, Spring's on the way!
In spite of impediment, set back, delay,
The flag's down—she's making a start!

JESSIE POPE.

THE CALL OF HIS ANCESTORS.

By G. B. LANCASTER,

Author of "Sons of Men," "A Spur to Smite," "Jim of the Ranges," etc.



ND—you will love me for always?"

"For always."

"But when the time comes for you to go back to your own land——" Lansert stopped chewing his end of sugár-cane and looked up at her.

"I shall never go back to my own land," he said.

She reached out, took his hand, and turned it on her knee, separating the long muscular fingers and interlacing them with her own. Their red tan showed the Anglo-Saxon blood of him, and the wrist within the linen coat was white. Basisi flung the hand aside and hid her face down in the grass and the convolvulus flowers.

"Ah, but I am all brown!" she wailed.

Lansert laughed. Then his two arms came over her shoulders, pulling her back until her eyes met his.

"Foolish one!" he said. "Look at me! Look at me, Basisi!"

His was a boy's face as yet, reckless, strongly cast, with capacity for great good or great evil, but sagging already into those lines which tell of a meaningless life lived out in the tropics. The coarse fleshliness of all Hawaiian women would be Basisi's one day. Just now she was slim-boned, delicately made, with great eyes in the pale brown of her face, and pouting lips not over-ripe. But the dark eyes were suddenly fire, and their glow startled Lansert.

"It is true," she said. "Many times have you seen the brown seaweed on the white reef. That is the skin of you and me. You do know it."

"Well, of course I know it. That doesn't matter. How many times have I told you that it doesn't matter?"

"To-morrow, or in more to-morrows, perhaps it will matter."

Lansert loosed her and flung himself back on the slope among the sugar-canes that stood up like tall celery-stems just unearthed.

"All right, then," he said. "Don't believe me. You are such a little idiot, Basisi!"

He cut another stalk of cane and bit into its soft fibrous wood fiercely. Basisi sobbed in little quick-drawn breaths, like a baby. Lansert heard, but he did not move. The hot unreasonable temper of a boy was his yet. Down the long sweep of the valley before them the great fields of cane turned silver, turned green again, as the light wind took them. A ribbon of white surf ringed the distance, and beyond it blue sea lay out, level and vivid, to mix with a sky as blue.

Over Lansert's head the long green flags brushed together in the breeze that brought scent from the prickly mimosa among the rocks. All the warm shining distances of rice-fields and taro-fields and banana plantations to rightward were sunk in drowsy peace against the lip of the murmuring sea. Lansert forgot Basisi as he looked on them. These two years of Honolulu's tropical glories, her strange scents, her sensuous idleness, had drawn the beseeching wayward charm of her deep into his blood. She was dearer to him than any woman—dearer far than he knew.

A motor-car panted uphill on the dusty road at their feet, halted a moment with a choke and a snort, buzzed on again as Lansert lifted on his elbow to watch it. He caught one glimpse of a fat man and a lean, both in white, beneath the sun-cover. Then it was gone, and he yawned, gathering himself up slowly.

"Come here, Basisi!" he said.

Basisi sobbed still, but she was watching him through her fingers.

"Basisi!"

No answer. Lansert turned on his heel, and then her slender arms were about him. Lansert wheeled like a flash and took her in his arms.

"How dare you disbelieve me?" he cried. "Say you're sorry! Say you're sorry—at once!"

Whispering, and with penitent kisses, she said it. Then Lansert pulled her arm through

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his, and ran whistling down to the road. Here he dragged up a double handful of convolvulus and twisted it about her head, until she fled from him with sparkles



"He dragged up a double handful of convolvulus and twisted it about her head."

of laughter and back-looking alluring glances.

Lansert followed slowly, with hands deep in his pockets and idle feet kicking the dust. The deep valleys, filled with sleep to the brim, were behind him, and scrubby mimosa and blackened stones cropped out from the red barren soil. Lansert swerved aside and trod a ripe pear beneath his foot, to hear it pop and see the army of little spears gush out. And behind him a man called his name suddenly. Lansert trod on another pear.

"Well," he said, not looking up, "what is it, Churton?"

"Your nerves are all right, anyway. Did you see two men go by in a motor just now?"

"I saw the motor, and I *heard* the stink of it. Why?"

"You didn't notice the men particularly?"

Lansert stared with puzzled eyes.

"No, I didn't. Why?"

Churton hid his gratification.

"One of 'em's the new boss of that plantation you're wanting to get a billet on. I told him about you, and he said I'd better ask you to go up to the hotel to-night and see him. I'd go if I were you. He seems a decent old sort."

"Did he ask me to dinner? I haven't had a feed at the hotel since they kicked me out for not paying my bill. It's a red-hot place, all right. Half a dollar for a lemon squash, and then they give you a straw that won't suck! Did he ask me to dinner, Churton?"

"No. Nine-thirty, he said."

"Huh! And you called him a decent sort! Well, I'll go. Jolly good of you to tell him about me, old man. I'll put in a word for you, too, if I get the chance."

He set his face to the town again, and Churton stood watching as he disappeared over the rise.

"I wonder how much damage he'll have done someone before I see him again?" he said.

On the lower slopes, among the gorgeous crotons, Basisi was waiting for Lansert; but he put her aside with firm hands.

"No," he said. "I must have a shave

and a hair-cut and some grub. When you are just on your beam ends, Basisi, you've got to look prosperous and bloated with riotous living. I can't bloat much in four hours, but I'll do my possible. And if that decent old sort who wouldn't give me a dinner doesn't like me, my girl, he can do the other thing. I'll manage along without him."

"Me like you," said Basisi, not at all comprehending.

Lansert took her face between his hands and kissed it.

"I believe you do, little girl. Well, I'll make my terms. Work and pay—principally pay. The deuce of it is that I look as if I could work like six."

He went down through the native quarter to the white winding streets of the town, spent his last dollar but two at a barber's, and came out of the next restaurant with three quarters in his pocket. Then he laughed, jingling them as he stood.

"Perhaps I'm a fool to go," he said. "Who is it talks about the bread of idleness? It's not too plenty, but it is uncommonly sweet."

The electric tram and many motors took the broad shining road to the hotel, but Lansert chose to walk its five miles through the hour of nameless charm that ends the tropical day. Close on his right the sea lay like blood, and above it stooped a sky of flaming gorgeous blue that changed and melted and sank through the palpitating colours of opal to one soft, rich, misty purple with the sea. Great trees of poinsettia, scarlet, vital as young blood, lost life and faded into the dusk. Among the oleanders and acacias white gowns fluttered, and girl voices spoke in the tender Hawaiian tongue. Above the rustling banana bushes the slender palms sloped sheer against sea and sky, and small stars glimmered through their leaves like fire-flies very far off. It was a land of dream, of illusion—a lotus-land to swamp the senses.

A trotting party of mounted police passed, with their khaki a blot of raw yellow, and their great Mexican stirrups clanking. Then silence closed in with the long palm avenues and the pale rice-gardens and the water-lily ponds; and from rich sweating earth and swooning vegetation, and the insweeping sea itself, rose up that strange haunting wordless scent, born of the first dews of night, which is the essence of Honolulu. Lansert drew it in with the full strength of his young lungs. It was the breath of life and the poison of life to him. It gave and it took away. It was intoxication, love, idleness, glamour—the gleam of will-o'-the-wisp, the unsteady dazzle of stars on running water. It was the soft smoothing out, the disintegration of all that was vital, all that made for bodily and spiritual grip.

Night came swiftly—dark and velvet-footed as a cat. Sounds and laughter and the beat of feet ceased to echo on the road. The red eyes of the electric tram blinked up, glared, and left him to the shadows beyond the lamp-posts. Under the great portico of the hotel he halted, glancing at his watch. Then he ran up the steps, laughing.

"For if that decent old sort hasn't given special orders, the odds are that they won't let me in," he said.

But the Japanese waiter with the shoe-button eyes had received his orders. He led Lansert across the wide hall to the elevator and up to a first-floor room that overlooked the sea, received his tip with an air of detached unconcern, announced Lansert, and shut him into the big half-lighted room.

Lansert made a step—stopped dead, with the smile suddenly wiped from his face and his eyes hardening. Down the room, quickly, with hands out, came the lean man of the motor-car.

"Jeff," he said, "my boy, I—I saw you this afternoon. I was afraid you wouldn't come. Jeff, didn't you know how I've been looking for you these two years and more?"

Lansert did not move. His hands were shut by his sides.

"I never guessed it was you," he said.

"You mean that you would not have come if you had? I feared that. I warned Churton not to tell you."

Lansert drew a long breath, moving his neck as though a yoke galled him. It was the yoke of memories — memories of a clipped-in childhood and a boyhood stuffed with assertions of all that he owed his parents, his name, his heritage, his posterity. Here he owed no man anything, except occasional hotel and tailor bills. Here——

"What do you want?" he asked.

The elder man came close. Every movement was a fine unbroken link in the chain that was leading Lansert back—back to the days when he had obeyed this man, and loved him and dreaded him, and wrenched free from him in one mad burst of passion, and gone out of his life.

"What do you want?" said Lansert again.

"I want you. You are my only son, Jeffrey."

Lansert looked away from the kindly, compelling old eyes.

"You've got mother—and Milly," he said restlessly. "I—we were always having rows, anyway."

"Milly is not a son. Holme Crecy will be yours when I go, Jeff. And I'm getting an old man. There have been Lanserts of Holme Crecy for five hundred years, and you are the last. Don't you realise all that you owe your name and your heritage, Jeff?"

The shadows of Lansert's youth were rising up round him in the darkening room—the old gardens, the old grey walls, the old man's voice, the old shibboleth of honour, of duty, of all that he owed his blood.

"I never thought you'd want me back," he said lamely.

"Want you! You are my heir—you will be the head of the Lanserts—and—you are my son. When you have a son of your own, you'll understand what that means, boy."

Sudden thought of the golden present jerked Lansert's words out headlong.

"No—no, I can't come back! I can't! No!"

"Why not?"



"Basisi was squatting, waiting."

Lansert was silent.

"Why not? You have no work to do?"

"No."

"Then why should you not come home—to your mother, to your own land—to me?"

"I love Honolulu," said Lansert. "I love it better than I ever loved Holme Crecy—better than any place in the world!"

"Pshaw! That's childish. You must have done with your pirates and your

cannibal islands and mermaids now, Jeff. You must come back to the life you were born for. You must take your place in the county, as the Lanserts always have taken it. You must enter Parliament. You must be a Lansert of Holme Crecy, not an alien under an alien flag."

"I love the Stars and Stripes!" flung out Lansert defiantly.

The old man turned on his heel, walked the room through twice, came back, and stood before his son.

"There were Lanserts at the Crusades," he said, "there were Lanserts through the Civil War. Lansert blood was spilt on the Tower block. Those men loved England, fought for England, died for England. Is it left for you, the last of their blood, to deny England?"

The force of each word drove home, finding Lansert undefended. And now, for the first time, he understood what Honolulu had done for him. She had given him fullness of joy, but she had sapped the power of his manliness. She had taught him to love her, but she had drawn from him the strength that could keep her his. This old man was stronger. This grim grey old sea-dog, from the grim grey old sea-girt island, was too strong for him—too strong.

"I—never denied England," he said weakly.

"Then come back to her—with me."

"I can't."

The old man exploded in an oath.

"You will give me your reasons," he said—"now at once."

Lansert was dumb. Basisi was not a reason which would make for satisfaction to his father. Besides, the dogged fibre yet left in his blood meant to keep her name out of this. Then his father's nervous, sinewy hand gripped his forearm.

"Boy, boy, come back to us! Come home! The Lanserts never begged, but I beg to you, Jeffrey. Come home before I die. It is not only an old name and an old home that are wanting you, my son. Your mother wants you, Milly wants you, I want you. I want you all the time, Jeffrey!"

"I——" Lansert stopped, scarcely breathing. It seemed that the life would have gone out of him with the words. "Don't!" he said in his throat, shook the hand off, and went over to the window, taking the night air full on his face, where the sweat had risen.

Below, through the palms and the bottle trees came the shine of the mighty rollers rushing ever into the shore. Over those breakers Lansert had ridden a plank landwards many times. The keen joy of it! The smart and the sting of salt waves in the sun came back to him. Taste of the sugar-cane came back to him. Thoughts thronged in on the darkness, made virile by that strange harsh, nameless scent, which was pulling the heart out of him.

There was silence behind him—dead silence. Suddenly he knew it. Suddenly he turned. His father was sunk in a chair, with his grey head bowed on the table. Lansert hesitated a moment only. Then he went over, putting his hand on the bent shoulders.

"I will come back with you, father," he said.

The old man twisted round and looked at him.

"If you say it, you will do it," he said slowly. "A Lansert never goes back on his word."

"No, I will do it."

An hour later Lansert went out to the night—the last night that would be his in Honolulu. He dared not think. There would be time for thought in all the years to come. He walked fast, with head low and lips shut tight. Through the white, crooked town, with its men from all ends of earth passing and passing again, through the native quarter, where laughter and soft songs came out to him, up the steep hill toward the Pali, where Basisi lived, he went without stopping. Outside the timber and tin hut, with the native roof of banana leaves, Basisi was squatting, waiting. She sprang at him with broken words of delight and cooings of love. But he put her aside.

"Come up to the Pali," he said. And side by side, she silent because he willed it so, they went up the steep road to the Pali.

Many years ago, Kamehameha the Great drove his enemies, to the number of three thousand fighting men, over the tall cliff of the Pali, to meet death on the jagged rocks deep below. By night and day a wind rages there eternally, fretting the great trees and the crumbling rocks, and buffeting the low scrub that clings to the straight sides. It is a place of lost souls, of despair, of desolation, and many times the lawless blood in him drew Lansert there, to feel the strong winds beat his face.

On this night, that was to be the ending of all that was dear, he was minded to feel it again, that he might forget the dreamy sweetness of the valleys of delight. By the

stone parapet edging the cliff he stood still, looking out over the top of the world. The moon had made of the distant far-sweeping sea a silver shield, of the sky a purple curve pricked with faint stars. Deep at his feet the heads of mighty trees stood close, looping out, and surrounding pale rice and sugar fields with their darkness. A bunch of cacti crouched like some pale loathly animal in the



"Lansert tramped up the gangway, with the alert grey-haired man behind him."

naked rocks, and all about them the rush of the wind fluttered, shrieking, moaning. Lansert took Basisi's hands in his. In his young egotism and his sharp pain he did not think to save her.

"Basisi," he said, "I am going away."

"Me come, too," said Basisi, and leaned her lips up to his.

"No. I go where you cannot come, Basisi."

"But—you come back soon to me?"

"No," said Lansert, "I can never come back to you, Basisi."

It was the tone more than the words which stilled her. Over the two young things seemed to draw a foreknowledge of that death which the rotting bones far below had known.

"You no want to go," said Basisi.

"Want to!" Lansert laughed shortly. "No, I don't want to. Can't you understand that?"

"Then why go—away—from here—and me?"

"I must. I gave my word of honour."

"What is your word of honour?" said Basisi.

"It is the very devil, I think," said Lansert bitterly. "It is the one thing that a man can't break. It is the thing that is taking me away from you."

She loosed his hands. She sprang up on the parapet, where the strong wind swayed her.

"Then I go now!" she cried, and felt Lansert's hot hands gripping her, and his arms about her, and his kisses on her face.

"You—ah, how could you?" he said, and his voice was broken.

She raised herself, whispering in his ear.

"When you go, you will come back? One day you will come back to Basisi?"

"I can't—I can't! I've got my duty to do. I don't belong to you, and Honolulu, and the sea, and the sun. I belong to men who have been dead hundreds of years, and to a name the beggars didn't know how to spell, and to an old picture gallery, and about fifty suits of armour that I couldn't get into."

"Me no understand why."

"Nor I. But I do, and I've got to stand by it. I have got to go, little one."

"When you are very far off, you will think of Honolulu when the sunset comes, and the

smoke from the burning mountain is red along the sky, and the boats sail in, and the band plays——"

"Ah, stop it!" cried Lansert sharply.

He turned from her, and stood with the bitterness of renunciation on him. The call of his ancestors was heavy in his ears; the demand they made on his blood throbbed dully along his veins. No man is irresponsible, no man may shirk his obligations. His father had proved that to him. His mind was set to the future, but the soft fingers of Honolulu were pulling at his senses.

Basisi's arms came round him.

"When you go away on the ship, and the girls bring the flower wreaths for the men to wear, and you go out on the ship, and the men drop the wreaths, to say that they will come back, you will drop a wreath to me?" she said.

"No, for I will not come back."

"But if you drop the wreath, it is to mean that you will come back."

"I know that. Good Heavens, d'you think I don't know that? Haven't I seen the boats go out a thousand times, and the girls waiting? But because I know it means that, I can't drop you a wreath, Basisi. I can't—I can't!"

"But I will bring you one to-morrow, when the boats go out," said Basisi.

There was noise and laughter and colour and vivid life on the wharf next evening, when the great Pacific boat screamed her eagerness from the red funnels, and the blue peter dipped and sank fluttering in the stern. Lansert came down, tight-lipped and hard-eyed, through the swaying crowd, thrusting between the knots of police, in their smart clay-yellow khaki, swerving aside from porters trundling heavy barrows, passing the big, strong-limbed, lazy-eyed native men and the slim, honey-coloured boys in their white loin cloths. There was a wealth of shifting colour, of talk in many tongues, of tarry smells and flower scents and bilge water. There was the tension in the air that means good-bye, that means parting, that means a breaking of dear-loved ties.

It was all familiar to Lansert as the sound of his own voice, as the sight of his reflection in the glass. From the grey keen-eyed man beside him little exclamations of delight popped like soda-water corks. But Lansert had no answers to give. He was seeking among the girls offering their long wreaths, and the passengers strung about with garlands, for Basisi, and at the foot of the gangway he found her.

Among all the trailing chains of flowers, Basisi carried one wreath only. It was made from the flower Lansert loved best—the lemon-pale, faint-scented lily, fragile and drooping, falling round her hands coldly. Lansert stooped, and she hung it about his neck. And she whispered quickly and low—

"You will drop it back to me?"

"No," said Lansert, and straightened, and tramped up the gangway, with the alert grey-haired man behind him.

On the deck was more noise and hurry and laughter, many people pressing near to shake hands with Lansert and to twist wreaths about him. But he broke free from all, leaving the pale lily one only, with its cold spoiled blossoms against his neck, and thrust out of the crowd and away to the bows and to peace.

Below him the native bandsmen were playing. Their music had made Lansert's heart ache many times with sheer joy in its beauty. Now he was nerving himself to hear it for the last time. On the poop the little brown boys clambered and stood, balancing ready to spring. Against the near side the out-going people clustered, waving, shouting, crushing their garlands, until the bitter-sweet scent of them struck on Lansert's senses with acute pain. His arms were on the taffrail, his face between his hands, and his eyes were on Basisi, watching with wistful, back-flung face below. She was all of Honolulu, all of love, all of life to Lansert.

And still the band played—played on the last fibres of Lansert's control, played the very heart out of him. Twice his hands lifted to the wreath and dropped again. Twice he looked away from the waiting face below, and looked back again. The throb of the engines came more insistent under his feet; the last rope fell curling back on the wharf; all the silver-throated voices of the band pealed out a tune that Lansert knew. But the man beside him put it into words—

You'll tak' the high road, an' I'll tak' the low road,
An' I'll be in Scotland afore ye,
But me an' my true love'll never meet again
By the bonny, bonny banks o' Loch Lomon'!

Lansert lifted his hands suddenly and snapped the flower-string behind his neck. The wreath fell, twisting and sliding, but Lansert reached over the rail and caught it back to him in a double handful of crushed, broken links.

"What a pity!" said his father beside him. "You have broken your lovely chain."

But Lansert did not answer. He had broken more than that.

THE HANDKERCHIEF.

By AUSTIN PHILIPS.

THE sun came in at the sick-room window, bright, invigorating, warm. The big cheval glass mirrored it. The opposing wall shone, cream-coloured and fresh. There was dancing gold in the companion's hair; on her blouse the buttons sparkled. But she looked anxious—nervous, even—as Harcourt Challinor leaned over the bed. The sick woman moved listlessly and closed her eyes.

"Pull down the blind," she said faintly; "the sun's too strong. I can't bear it."

Harcourt Challinor motioned to the companion. The girl nodded and did as the sick woman asked. Then she came back slowly to the doctor's side.

"Is that better?" he asked gently.

The patient moaned affirmatively, then she turned over and away from him. He made no further effort to rouse her, but he beckoned the companion to the door.

"She's very weak," he whispered—"very weak indeed. You must try to keep her spirits up."

The companion looked at him eagerly.

"Oh, I do, I do!" she answered. "But I can't get her to take an interest in anything. I read aloud to her as much as she'll let me. Look"—and she pointed across to the table—"look at all those!"

Harcourt Challinor had already looked. He had seen the quality of the literature. He changed the subject quickly.

"When does she next have her food?" he asked.

The girl glanced nervously at the carriage clock on the mantelpiece.

"Now—immediately," she replied. "Your visit prevented me from preparing it, or she would be having it now."

Challinor looked grave.

"Run and get it at once," he said. "Don't keep her waiting a minute. It's most essential that she should have it at the exact intervals." Then—as the girl still hesitated—he pushed her gently to the door.

"I'll let myself out," he added, "as soon as I've washed my hands."

The companion obeyed. Challinor listened intently. When he was satisfied that she had gone, he came back into the room and shut the door. The sick woman stirred uneasily and turned towards him, but her eyes were still shut.

"Is that you, dearest?" she asked. "I'm so glad. Don't leave me again; I can't bear it. I want you to be with me all the time."

Challinor stooped across the bed. "I'm Doctor Challinor," he said gently, "but Miss Wells will be here in a few minutes. She's only gone to get you some food."

The patient sighed, turned over again, and lay with her back to the doctor.

"I don't want you—I want Maud!" she said petulantly. "Please go away. Maud does everything I ask."

Challinor shrugged his shoulders and said nothing. Then presently he, too, went out. But he did not run down the easy-falling Georgian staircase light-foot, as was his wont; he went tiptoeing across the landing.

The nursery was empty, yet Challinor went in. He sat down in the big rocking-chair. Unconsciously almost, he set it moving. The heavy rockers creaked; the *va-et-vient* sent a faint but grateful draught to cool his forehead, that ached. But though a thousand thoughts chased each other across his brain, he listened—listened always. As yet no footstep touched the stairs; no clatter of cups or chink of silver upon brass came up to drive him into action.

All at once he stopped rocking; he brought the chair to a standstill. His feet met the floor. From his breast-pocket he took a handkerchief. It was folded. He opened it, spread it out upon his knee. Then he bunched it in his hand and carried it to a pocket of his coat.

Suddenly, with a gasp of self-reproach, he pulled the handkerchief out again. He regarded it almost with fright, yet thankfulness was plain in his face. It was as if

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he had remembered something—something which had saved him from an act of folly or from some terrible false step. Very quickly he opened a pair of pocket scissors and cut a tiny notch on one side of the silk square, just where the middle and dividing fold showed how the first doubling of the handkerchief had been done. Then he began to rock again—to rock, to think, but, above all, to listen.

Harcourt Challinor was between the devil and the deepest sea. If he held his hand, all that counted was lost. If he struck, nothing more likely than that the blow should fall upon himself. Whatever course he took must be taken unaided. Unaided, because so alone could he, Harcourt Challinor, *locum* for the absent Doctor Ames, get the kudos of discovery. Unaided because, where a weaker man would have sought the help of the experienced, he, Harcourt Challinor—not yet thirty, without capital, and determined to succeed—meant to seize the swift occasion that should lay the corner-stone of success in grimy, smoky Murchester town. Yet one false step would botch all. He must act alone, but he must act wisely, or it would be too late.

Still he listened, and there was no sound. Because his brain rioted, and he feared that he should not hear, he got up and came across to the half-open door. And he stood there, leaning against the panelled frame at its side.

All at once, from far down the easy-falling stairs, there came a tiny clatter and chink. Light footsteps tapped the tiled hall. Then they ceased; the thick carpet had numbed them. In a flash Harcourt Challinor was out of the nursery. He was going down—three steps at a time.

He was going down, and the woman was coming up. The cups clattered, and there was a tinkle of brass. So she did not hear him, neither did she see. But over the banisters Harcourt Challinor saw. As the woman reached the little entresol where the staircase turned, the man reached it, too, and his jarring shoulder sent the tray asprawl.

The woman staggered backwards. Broken crockery strewed the floor, spilled gruel flooded the carpet. Pieces of bowl islanded there, while down the stairs the tray clanged, noisy, resonant, and shrill.

Challinor snatched at his handkerchief. "A thousand pardons!" he cried. "I shall never forgive myself for my carelessness! But I'll soon clean it up for you, though I can't mend the cups." And he dropped upon his knees, handkerchief in hand. Then he stopped and forced himself to smile.

"I must be economical," he said. "I'm not going home for hours yet. I must keep a piece against accidents." As he spoke, he tore the green silk square in two—tore it from the notch down. One half he thrust back into his pocket; with the other he began to dab the floor.

But the strip was too small. It was sopped through and through, and still the grey-whiteness of the gruel blotched the carpet's red.

The girl, who had been leaning against the wall, breathless and with her hand upon her heart, had recovered herself now. She even laughed. Stooping, she touched the kneeling Challinor on the shoulder. "Don't be so stupid!" she said. "It's like trying to mop up a lake with a dish-cloth. You needn't bother any more; I'll see to it when you're gone."

Challinor rose slowly to his feet, but he held her eyes with his own, while behind his back and into the pocket of his morning-coat he slipped the damp green silk. The girl noticed nothing. She was still frightened, for all that she had laughed. Under his searching gaze she shifted uncomfortably. Alert and keen, Challinor saw that her hand shook. She was nervous, and her nervousness seemed to grow.

Then, with an eagerness that he could not check, Challinor looked down at the *débris*. The woman had set her hand upon her heart again; she was drawing difficult breath. Pallor and pinkness quarrelled on her cheeks. Pallor won. Pale, gasping, with limbs that refused action, she leaned against the wall. Harcourt Challinor looked up again. His eyes devoured her face, and he read there something that exceeded common fright. It was terror that he saw—the quick-born terror of a mind that conscience stabs. He was suspicious no more; he was certain. For all her charming dolliness, her innocent, girlish tricks, he was sure. But was it the other as well? It must—oh, it *must* be! She was too young, too incapable, above all, too gentle, to be acting alone. She was under an influence which had ruined her. Yes, that was the explanation of it all. A swift sense of pity seized him, but he crushed it as it was born. For such a deed as this no excuse could avail. Before him, sharp and defined, his duty lay—his duty to the other, and to himself hardly less.

He tried to force sympathy into his voice,

and failed. It trembled with excitement, and the effect was the same.

"I'm a lout—a clumsy lout!" he said. "I'm afraid I really frightened you by my carelessness."

The girl struggled into speech.

"I—I wasn't expecting you!" she panted. "I thought you'd gone."

Challinor did not redden, neither did he flinch.

"Oh, yes," he said. "But I went into the nursery for a minute. The kiddies were out, but there was a wonderful old rocking-chair, and I stopped to admire it. It *is* beautiful, isn't it?"

The girl, reassured, shrugged her shoulders a little.

"To tell the truth, I've never noticed, Doctor Challinor. You see, Mrs. Winter keeps me so busy."

Challinor's eyes were everywhere except on her face. The mention of his patient's name had made him start. "Yes," he managed to bring out—"yes, I suppose she keeps you pretty well on the move. And then, when you're not working, you're reading. I never saw a person get through so many novelettes and romances as you."

Her face had lit up, if Challinor had dared to see it.

"They're everything—everything!" she cried. "They're the only places where things go right."

Challinor ventured a glance. He knew her romantic to silliness, surfeited with fiction of the worst kind, nurtured in all that was unwholesome in literature. But he saw her pretty pinkness; her features that would have been perfect if they had been less small; he watched, in spite of himself, the beautiful blueness of her eyes. She attracted him against his will. Once more his heart softened. Again he hardened it. And he took out his watch.

"By Jove, but I'm late!" he cried. "If you really don't mind finishing the cleaning up for me, I shall be awfully obliged."

Then, without waiting for an answer, he ran down the stairs, caught up his hat from the hall table, and opened the front door. But he paused, checked by a sudden thought. He turned quickly round. The girl was still leaning against the staircase wall.

"Oh, by the way, Miss Wells," he called, "I shan't be coming to-morrow morning. I have an appointment which will keep me away. But I'll come in the evening between six and seven. Tell Mr. Winter that I hope to find him in. It's some days since we've had a chat, and I've lots to tell him."

The girl nodded back. Challinor went out, down the long drive, into the road beyond.

The girl picked up her skirts and went down and across the hall. From the pantry she brought a damp cloth, a pan, and a brush. Coming up again, she began to clean the mess. Her face had changed. She looked relieved; anxiety seemed gone.

Had she but known it, Harcourt Challinor was gone, too. It was to London that he went. It was by the train which left Murchester at midnight that he travelled—third class, and knowing no sleep. It was at five o'clock next morning that he rang the bell at a house in Wimpole Street. A hospital friend lived there—a man with private means and many letters after his name—one who could afford to wait. Challinor, with a reputation to make, had come to him. He knew that he was sure of help.

It was after six that evening when Challinor came up the long drive again. He did not come alone; another man was with him. He was Challinor's own age. His face was strong, but less strong than his friend's. Cleverness was in it, and less keenness. On him no hardening struggle had set its mark.

When the servant answered the bell, Challinor took the lead.

"I should like to see Mr. Winter," he said. "Will you ask him to speak to me?"

The servant opened a door. "Mr. Winter is upstairs with Mrs. Winter," she explained. "If you will please go in and wait, I will ask him to come down."

Challinor began to stride the room. He was trembling with excitement. His friend came over to him and patted his arm. There was encouragement in the gesture, affection in his face.

"Steady, old man!" he said. "You'll pull it off, sure enough!"

In a minute Mr. Winter came in. He was extraordinarily handsome, tall, debonair, and athletic. His eyes had the clearness that only the eyes of the games-playing man can keep. He looked as honest as the day. He gave the impression of having no nerves—of being a bundle of healthy sanity. His clothes fitted him beautifully. He seemed at once a man's man and a woman's—that is, the kind of man that a woman wants to marry. He came across to Challinor, smiling frankly and with outstretched hand. But when he spoke, there was a faint timbre of anxiety in his voice.

"Hullo!" he said. "Glad to see you. But I hope there's no bad news. I——"

Then he caught sight of Challinor's friend. His eyebrows went up; he looked wonderingly at them both.

"I don't quite understand——" he began. "Is Edie any worse?"

Challinor took a step forward.

"Yes," he answered, "she is worse—very much worse."

Arthur Winter went pale.

"You don't mean to say that there's any immediate danger?" he cried. "Of course, I know that it's hopeless—that she'll never"—his voice broke, but he still went on—"that she'll never recover. But Doctor Ames told me, before he went away, that she might live for years. So did the specialist——"

He stopped short, as if he did not want to hurt the feelings of Doctor Ames's *locum*.

Challinor half smiled.

"Oh, I don't regard myself as infallible," he said—"far from it. That is why I have felt it my duty to obtain a second opinion. This is Doctor Barrasford, of Wimpole Street, who is staying with me. He is a specialist in your wife's disease—he is also an old friend of mine—so I ventured to bring him along."

Arthur Winter's face lightened immediately. He walked across to Doctor Barrasford and put out his hand. "How d'you do?" he said cordially. "Pleased to see you. Challinor's right—quite right. I'm glad he asked you to come."

Doctor Barrasford bowed.

"Hadn't you better come up and see my wife now?" Arthur Winter asked.

Barrasford consulted Challinor with a look. Challinor turned to Winter.

"I think Doctor Barrasford ought to see the companion," he said. "You see, Miss Wells is so much with your wife that, in a way, she knows as much about the case as I do. Isn't that so, Doctor?"

Barrasford nodded. "Yes," he answered, "I should very much like to have a chat with Miss Wells."

Arthur Winter darted to the door.

"Right!" he exclaimed. "She *does* know a lot, doesn't she? And she's been so good and devoted to Edie that it's quite a good idea to send for her. I'll fetch her along at once. I won't keep you waiting a minute." And with that he hurried out.

"Well," asked Doctor Barrasford as the door shut—"well, what do you think now?"

Challinor shrugged his shoulders.

"I'll tell you presently," he answered; "we must wait."

Presently the rings of the *portière* jangled on their rod. The door opened. Miss Wells came in. Arthur Winter followed. Challinor proffered a chair. Miss Wells sat down. She was ivory white; great rims were under her eyes. Her hands twisted unceasingly, her tongue strove to moisten her lips.

Arthur Winter looked across to Barrasford. "I have told Miss Wells that you would like to have a chat with her," he said. "She will only be too glad."

But it was not Barrasford, but Challinor who answered him. He spoke quietly, though he was all on edge.

"Mr. Winter," he began, "there has been such a marked change in the condition of your wife that my suspicions have been aroused, and, as a result of what I have done, I have satisfied myself beyond all doubt that she has had poison administered to her daily for some time past!"

Arthur Winter jumped to his feet.

"If this is a joke," he cried angrily, "it is a precious poor one!"

Challinor waved him back.

"It is no joke," he answered—"far from it. Arsenic is not a humorous subject."

"Arsenic!" Arthur Winter gasped. "But this is monstrous!"

Challinor turned to Barrasford.

"Perhaps you will assure Mr. Winter that I am speaking the truth," he said.

Barrasford bowed.

"I have the best of reasons for knowing that what my friend states is correct," he said.

Arthur Winter looked as if he wanted to knock someone down. But Challinor took up his tale, unperturbed.

"After having satisfied myself, medically, that the patient was suffering from arsenical poisoning," he went on, "I took other steps. I made certain that only one person could be administering it. Whether another was cognisant of the matter, I am not yet prepared to say."

Arthur Winter took a step towards him. He raised his hand threateningly. "If you aren't out of this house in two minutes," he cried, "I shall call the police!"

Challinor permitted himself to smile. "That," he replied, "would be foolish. You had better first hear what your wife's companion has to say." And he pointed an accusing finger at Miss Wells.

The girl tried to speak, but the words would not come. She moistened her lips in



"He began to dab the floor."

vain. But her eyes were on Arthur Winter always.

Challinor took out a pocket-book and spread a strip of white stuff on the table.

"Here is the proof," he said coldly. "This is the piece of the silk handkerchief with which I mopped up some gruel that she was carrying to your wife. My friend here has analysed it. It contained arsenic!"

The calm evenness of his tones carried conviction with them. Arthur Winter hardly needed to look at Doctor Barrasford for confirmation. Suddenly he stepped across to the shivering girl.

"Is this true?" he cried. "Is this true?" And Challinor, for the first time, was satisfied that he acted no part.

With a desperate effort the girl found voice.

"It's a lie—it's a lie," she screamed, "and I can prove it! I saw him do what he says, but he's made a terrible mistake. I saw the handkerchief. It was green—green silk—and arsenic is used as a dye."

Arthur Winter swung round on Challinor with a great thankfulness in his face.

"Thank Heaven," he cried, "it's a mistake! Doctor Challinor, you're mistaken. You've ridden a theory to death. Your evidence is worthless. She's as innocent as a baby."

Again Challinor's accusing forefinger pointed at the girl.

"Does she look innocent?" he questioned sternly. "Answer me that, Mr. Winter. And, besides, I have more proof."

He took out his pocket-book as he spoke. From it he drew a second strip of silk. He set it on the table by its fellow. Together they made a square.

"Listen," said he. "Before I knocked over the tray and spilled the gruel, I tore my handkerchief in half, *because it was green*. I gave the unused half to Doctor Barrasford as well. He analysed that, too. There was no arsenic in it, so that we know there was no arsenic in the dye. The arsenic was in the food that Miss Wells was carrying to your wife. Look at her, and believe."

But Maud Wells's face was hidden in her hands. She was sobbing wildly, and the tears trickled through her fingers on to her dress.

Arthur Winter did look at her, and he believed at last.

"You she-devil!" he whispered fiercely. "You she-devil!"

He turned back to the two men.

"My wife treated her like a sister!" he exclaimed. "What reason had she—what possible reason? Why did she do it?"

But the answer came from neither of the two doctors. It was Maud Wells who spoke. Her eyes shone through her tears; her voice thrilled at him, proud and glad.

"For *you!*" she said. "I did it for *you!* You were worth it. And if she had died, you would have married me. I could have made you love me, if only *he* hadn't interfered!"

Arthur Winter looked at her in horror, then he collapsed into a chair. "This is awful!" he shuddered. "I've done nothing to deserve this."

For all the pride of success that surged in Challinor's brain, for all that he knew his reputation was made, sympathy leapt, live and quick, in his heart. He came swiftly across the room.

"You've done nothing," he said—"nothing at all. And I beg your pardon for having, for a single moment, thought that you had!"

Then he looked long and silently at Miss Wells. She was sobbing again—sobbing fiercely—and her body trembled and shook. But her grief was for failure—not for shame. The sight turned him sick. The thought of her punishment set him shuddering. Even victory had its price. But for the final time he forced himself into hardness. And he remembered the sick woman who had trusted her. Once more he turned to Barrasford, who stood with averted face.

"Barrasford," he whispered, and he touched his friend's arm—"Barrasford, would you mind fetching a cab?"

The other looked at him with a question in his eyes. Challinor understood. He shook his head. "Impossible," he answered—"altogether impossible!"

Barrasford said nothing, but he realised that Challinor was right. Things must take their course. And, still careful not to see the sobbing girl, he walked slowly to the door.

But before he reached it, Arthur Winter had darted past him. He trembled with excitement; he was beside himself. The shock had been too much for him. His past life, easy, comfortable, and slow, had wholly unfitted him to bear such an hour as this.

"Let *me* go!" he cried, and his voice rose high, imploring, shrill. "My fingers itch; I can't trust myself! I'm afraid of what I may do to her!"

Then, as neither Challinor nor Barrasford answered him, he turned the handle and rushed out. Challinor, going over to the window, saw him dash madly down the drive. He ran like a man pursued; he was running—from himself.

LORD STRANLEIGH, PHILANTHROPIST.

By ROBERT BARR.

IV. A DISASTROUS DASH INTO THE FRAY.

LORD STRANLEIGH, rarely very exuberant, nevertheless maintained a calm, equable cheerfulness that made him exceedingly companionable. Cynical people said: "Why shouldn't he be cheerful, rolling in millions?" But it has been authoritatively stated that wealth does not bring happiness, though it is difficult to meet a man who really believes this. The afore-mentioned cynical people were wont to remark that nothing could disturb Stranleigh's equanimity except a crease in his trousers or a coat that set badly at the shoulders. In this they were wrong, because at times a Scotchman could seriously interfere with his poise. Indeed, Stranleigh once remarked that he believed in the good qualities of Scotchmen as much as he believed in Providence, never having seen either.

The dour Peter Mackeller, who was compounded of many virtues, often got on Stranleigh's nerves, and when Alexander Corbitt was in one of his more obstinate moods, he could depress Stranleigh away below zero.

Stranleigh entered the large smoking-room of the Camperdown Club with the eager joyfulness of a man who had made an unexpected discovery, and wanted to talk about it; but after a quarter of an hour's conversation with Corbitt, he set down his half-smoked cigar on the ash-tray and, leaving his glass untasted, rose to his feet.

"All right, Corbitt," he said. "Don't worry any more about it. Sorry I inflicted my stupidity upon you. Forgive me. Good night!" And the young man who, fifteen minutes before, had entered with light step, retired a walking picture of dejection.

A wry smile twisted Corbitt's lips, but he said nothing. Behind Corbitt, in an easy, leathern arm-chair, reading his evening paper, sat a venerable gentleman, with ruddy face and snow-white hair and whiskers. He seemed to be a typical English country squire, who enjoyed a good meal and sound wine. As the conversation between Corbitt and Stranleigh went on, animated at first so far as the latter was concerned, the old man's paper sank to his knees. He rested his white head on the padded back of his chair, and quite undisguisedly listened to the talk, an ever-increasing smile lighting up his face. He was Sir George Selwyn, founder and supposedly chief shareholder of Selwyn's Bank, of which the crusty Corbitt was manager. When Stranleigh had disappeared, Sir George said quietly—

"Alexander, turn your chair round this way. I have been listening to your conversation, and I wish to make some comments on it."

The usually impassive Corbitt promptly obeyed, but on this occasion could not conceal that he was startled. Sir George was about the only man on earth he deferred to, as Selwyn, being president of the bank, held Corbitt's commercial life in his hands. Sir George, however, had shown his confidence in, and even his liking for, Corbitt. It was through his influence that the younger man had been admitted into this rather particular club. Sir George, still smiling, said—

"Do you know the last line of a most difficult verse from Browning, which G. K. Chesterton shows to be one of the simplest ever written, and confounds us all by the explanation?"

"I have no idea what you mean, Sir George."

"Why, I thought you Scotch were a poetical people! It's the verse about fishing the murex up, and it ends: 'What porridge had John Keats?'

"It crossed my mind, as I listened to you and Stranleigh, that Chesterton shows how easy it is to make us all seem stupid and ignorant. You made Stranleigh look rather a fool."

"Well, Sir George, he exasperates me

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sometimes by asking questions that any urchin on the street could answer."

"'What porridge had John Keats?'" mused Sir George. "That question takes on a new meaning for me. Porridge is a kind of granular food, I understand, softened by heat and moisture, much favoured in the north."

"Because of its cheapness," snapped Corbitt.

"I dare say. And there is oat-cake. I tried it once, at a pinch, while on a shooting excursion. It was about as hard as cast-iron and delicious as baked sawdust. Now, you were brought up on these two foods?"

"I admit it," said Corbitt—"proud of it."

"Yes, a man has a right to be proud of such endurance. But did you ever suspect that something of the hardness of oat-cake may have got into your nature?"

"It is quite possible; I hope so."

Sir George laughed.

"I see I can make no impression on you, so let us talk about Stranleigh, and about long-headed wisdom, supposed to be a Scottish quality. You have known Stranleigh for some time?"

"Yes."

"Do you always treat him as you did to-night?"

"Oh, I have had many a pleasant conversation with Stranleigh."

"Pleasant for him?"

"I hope so."

"Do you think him at all revengeful?"

"I don't exactly know what to think of him. Sometimes he seems to be a blithering idiot, and at others merely an ignorant ass."

The tolerant old man smiled inscrutably.

"I doubt your judgment and I deplore your diplomacy. If he happens to be quietly vindictive, I shouldn't like to be in your shoes. Stranleigh is the real owner of Selwyn's Bank."

Even the stolid Corbitt looked aghast at this intelligence.

"He can turn me out of the presidency whenever he wishes to do so. Judge, therefore, how insecure is your position!"

Corbitt's firm jaw snapped shut, then he said sharply—

"He may have my resignation to-morrow, if he wants it."

Sir George laughed heartily.

"He doesn't want it, my belligerent manager. I think all he desires from you is a little civility when he asks elementary questions. With so much money in his possession, Stranleigh's chief difficulty is the finding of reasonably safe investments. He came to me, some months ago, to seek my advice and to make a proposal. You must not suppose there was any surreptitious buying of stock in the bank. He arranged with me before he purchased a single share. I am to be president while I live, or until I resign. When I quit the presidency, Stranleigh has determined that you shall succeed me. He feels great confidence in you. Now, Corbitt, speaking in a cautious, Scottish way, as Stranleigh can turn us both out into the street at any moment he wishes to do so, don't you think it would be wise on our part to answer very civilly whatever questions he asks, even if the subject is politics, which I know you detest?"

"Sir George, I have always thought you the wisest man in London, and now I am sure of it. Not because Stranleigh has the power to dismiss me, but through the fact that he is a very decent fellow, I shall take care in future to speak to him fair. But here he comes, quite recovered from his depression. I hope he won't discharge me before I have time to make amends."

Stranleigh advanced towards the corner where the president and manager of Selwyn's Bank sat confronting one another, both watching his approach. There was no trace of resentment on the young nobleman's face. He greeted Sir George very deferentially, then turned with a twinkle in his eye upon Corbitt.

"Alexander," he said, "I have returned to enjoy an intimate confidential chat with you on the subject of radium."

"Radium!" cried Corbitt, in amazement.

"Yes. There are seventeen questions regarding radium that I wish answered."

"Well, you've come to the wrong shop, my lord; I don't know the first thing about radium."

"That is at once astonishing and gratifying. It is astonishing that any branch of knowledge is unknown to you, and it is gratifying that you will be unable to look down upon me from the lofty pinnacle of scientific erudition."

"I was just being lectured by Sir George here on my deficiencies. I don't think you can better his censure, but there's no harm in trying."

"My dear Corbitt, I shouldn't venture to censure you. I merely happened to meet Sir William Rankin in the library, and he was extremely kind to me, settling some points about radium that I never understood before. But there is a deeper mystery than

radium, which, perhaps, Sir William could have solved, yet I didn't like to ask him, so I kept the question for you."

"All right—fire away. I'll answer it if I can."

"The mystery is, why should Sir William be so polite and courteous?"

"Why shouldn't he be?"

"Because, Corbitt, he was born in Glasgow."

Sir George Selwyn laughed so heartily that finally Corbitt joined him. Stranleigh went on seriously, unheeding the mirth.

"I came here, Sir George, to consult with Corbitt anent my political duty during the coming election."

"And I," said Corbitt, "refuse to be consulted about a thing that doesn't exist."

"What doesn't exist?" demanded Stranleigh.

"Your political duty. You haven't any political duty, except to keep out of the fight. You might have voted in the House of Lords, but you won't have even that obligation to perform until after the election. The moment the writs are issued, you daren't open your mouth on the political situation. You must not write a letter to a candidate, and it is a criminal offence if you try to influence an elector concerning his vote. You just attempt any political duty, Lord Stranleigh, before the last poll is declared, and you may find yourself in one of His Majesty's prisons."

"Is that true, Sir George, or is he merely chaffing me?"

"True enough, Stranleigh. Until after the election, you are politically the most helpless of human beings."

"You amaze me!" exclaimed Stranleigh. "I gathered, through reading the newspapers, that I was trampling underfoot the liberties of the freeborn voters of this country—that I represented nobody, yet throttled the nation, and therefore must be swept away."

"I believe," said Sir George, "that rather accurately states the condition of things, but, if I were you, Stranleigh, I wouldn't worry; and especially do I advise you not to take any steps towards the defence of your order. I think a peer defending the House of Peers does more harm than good. The best plan for one in your lordship's position is to keep quiet. You have the consolation of knowing that the greatest Liberal statesman of the last century, the Right Honourable W. E. Gladstone, made no impression on the House of Lords, so I should say that this lot of politicians is not likely to succeed where he failed."

"Oh, you mistake my point of view entirely, Sir George," replied Stranleigh, rising in his eagerness and pacing up and down before him. "I favour the abolition of the House of Lords."

"What!" roared Corbitt, in amazement.

Old Sir George held his hand open behind his ear.

"I suspect, my lord, that age is interfering with my hearing. Would you mind repeating that sentence?"

"I favour the destruction of the House of Lords as a branch of legislature."

For a few moments there was silence, then it was Corbitt who spoke.

"I must confess," he said, "that I view politics entirely from a banker's standpoint. I think as a banker, and I vote as a banker. I am opposed to turmoil and change. The House of Lords has served us very effectually for a number of centuries, and although, doubtless, the peers have made mistakes, it is also true that upon occasion they gauged the popular will with more accuracy than Mr. Gladstone himself. As long as I am manager of Selwyn's Bank, I'm against any tinkering with the Constitution. All such meddling is bad for business. I'm a banker first, and a politician a long way to the rear."

"I quite agree with you, Alexander," remarked Sir George solemnly.

Stranleigh looked from one to the other in perplexity.

"The trouble with this club," he protested, "is that its members are all of one opinion, therefore an ignorant man like myself cannot learn the other side to any question."

"My dear Stranleigh," said Corbitt, "you've been having both sides of radium, I understand."

"And of banking," added Sir George, nodding at the manager.

"My own theory," continued Corbitt, "is that there are never two sides to a question. There can't be, although a lot of fools pose as fair-minded people, and pretend to be impartial when they're merely insane. To every question there is but one right side, and practical men do not waste time in looking at any other. In a political problem the side that makes for increase of business and stability of business is the right side."

Sir George signified his approval.

"It must be comfortable to feel as sure of anything as you do, Corbitt," said Stranleigh. "If I take an opposite view

about the House of Lords, my view must be wrong, I suppose ? "

" Of course."

Stranleigh rose, walked over to a writing-table, penned a few lines on a sheet of club paper, and returned.

" Corbitt, get that put into legal form, and I'll sign it. It gives Sir George Selwyn and yourself complete control of Selwyn's Bank. Thus, you see, any political vagaries of mine shall not be allowed to intrude themselves into the directors' room."

" Politically, what do you intend to do ? " asked Sir George gravely.

" I shall endeavour to assist the party opposed to the House of Lords."

" Yes, but how ? "

" I thought at first of resigning my seat in the House of Lords, and getting adopted as a candidate by some constituency for the House of Commons, but I am told that it is impossible."

" Quite. A peer or a felon cannot enter the Commons."

" An imbecile also is prohibited," interpolated Corbitt, " so even if Stranleigh could shake off his peerage, he is still barred from the suffrages of his countrymen."

Stranleigh laughed good-naturedly at this jibe on the part of the manager, who had evidently forgotten the warning given by the venerable president.

" I dare say I shan't do very much," said Stranleigh, unperturbed ; " I am too lazy. I'll try a few speeches, and when they stop me at that, I'll contribute to the party funds."

" I've already told you that, when the real speechifying begins, you'll be compelled to turn off the tap of your eloquence. Mum's the word for a peer after the writs are issued. As to contributing, you need to be even more careful. The Corrupt Practices Act bristles with difficulties for an amateur philanthropist. Better consult a good solicitor, well versed in Parliamentary law, before you exercise undue lavishness."

" Thanks, Corbitt, I will, and good night to you both. I must get home early and cogitate over this crisis."

The two men remained silent for some time after the young earl had taken his departure. It was Sir George who spoke first.

" There goes," he said, " the greatest danger to the Conservative Party."

" Oratory or cash ? " asked Corbitt.

" Oh, his oratory will come to very little, one way or another. But just imagine if he filled the war-chest of the Radicals with one million, two million, or three million pounds ! He could do it without feeling the loss, and the amount, judiciously expended, would sweep the reformers in by an overwhelming majority, merely by organisation, paid stump speakers, and thousands of motor-cars on election day, all without in the least infringing on your Corrupt Practices Act."

" What an appalling prospect ! Long and favourably as I have known Stranleigh, I should follow him now and sand-bag him ! By Jove, I'll do it ! " continued Corbitt, rising suddenly.

" Do what ? " cried Sir George, in alarm.

" I'll sand-bag him ! "

" Nonsense, nonsense ! " warned Selwyn. " Sit down, Corbitt. Don't you become as mad in one direction as Stranleigh is in another."

Corbitt laughed.

" I'm afraid, Sir George, you do not understand the ethics of the sand-bag. If you hit a man on the head with a sledge-hammer, you fracture his skull and kill him. The sand-bag breaks no bones. It merely knocks the victim insensible, and then you can do what you please with him. He never knows what struck him. Now, watch me sand-bag Stranleigh without leaving this room."

The manager crossed over to the writing-table at which Stranleigh had sat a few minutes before. He wrote a letter and addressed an envelope, then returned to his chief, who awaited him with anxious face.

" Lester Brent," explained Corbitt, " is by way of being a friend of mine. I have done him one or two good turns in business, and he believes a banker has no politics. He is Chairman of the Government Elections Committee. Now, hear my truthful epistle to him.

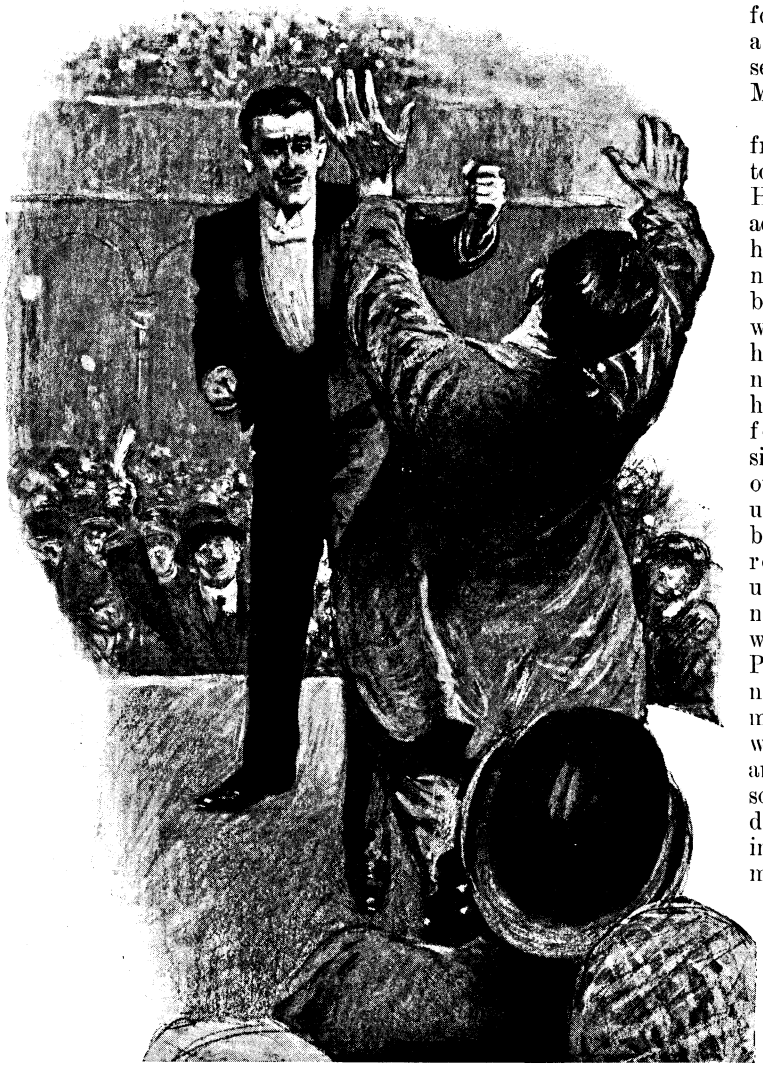
" DEAR BRENT,—With a General Election pending, do not get alarmed at receiving a letter from an Opposition club, but treat this communication as private. You know I do not meddle in politics, but to-night there came to my knowledge a piece of information which I think you ought to know, for it may be very important. I have reason to believe that Earl Stranleigh of Wychwood is about to take as active a part in the coming contest as the law will allow. His almost fabulous wealth invests him with enormous power. I dare not do more than give you a hint, which is that classic quotation to the effect that you should distrust the Greeks when they bring gifts.

"Keep your eye on Stranleigh, and you may be able to trip him up.

"Ever yours,

"A. C."

"Ah!" murmured Sir George. "Your object is to sow suspicion in the minds of the Government party?"



"The rioter, flinging up his hands, fell backwards with a crash on his followers."

"Certainly. When you add that little mustard seed to the already enormous mass of distrust against the Lords, if he were the Angel Gabriel himself, poor Stranleigh could not persuade Brent he was on his side. Thus do I sand-bag his lordship, who will never know who or what struck him."

A few minutes later the missive was on its way to the General Post Office, and was duly delivered to Lester Brent himself, being marked "Personal."

Meanwhile, Stranleigh lost no time in setting his machinery in motion, and in this was ably assisted by his secretary, Blake, who proved an indefatigable worker, and had the advantage of former experience, first as a journalist, and, second, as secretary to a Member of Parliament.

Stranleigh brought a fresh and original mind to bear upon politics. He realised that instant action was necessary if he meant to deliver a number of speeches before the issuing of the writs. Even with the help of Blake he could not spare the precious hours necessary to inform himself on the situation, and to write out speeches, so he hit upon the unique idea of buying his discourses ready-made. Blake undertook the task, with never a doubt that he would be successful. Professional orators are notoriously short of money. The seasons when they can reap gold are few and far between, so Blake, having had dealings with the tribe in the days of his Parliamentary secretaryship, assured Stranleigh that no difficulty would be met, and that he would keep his lordship's name out of the deal.

"I'll buy the speeches for myself," he said, "just as I would purchase a column article on a current subject for a daily paper. I'll pay cash to the author, and make him sign over the copyright to me."

He hired a taxi-cab by the day, and called personally on all the stump speakers for the Government side then in London. He could

not have chosen a better time for the purchase of eloquence, and the gratified orators themselves offered every assistance, presenting him with addresses which otherwise he would have found trouble in obtaining. Many noted speech-makers had come up from the Midlands, from the North of England, and from Scotland, to receive at headquarters their final instructions for the fray, and the energetic Blake raked them in. Several of these would not accept ready money, but insisted on cheques, which they wished to send home.

Blake, wise in his generation, would not sign cheques, so a compromise was made with money orders. He returned to Stranleigh House that night a very tired man, but there were twenty-one speeches in his possession, together with receipts making over the copyright to the young secretary. If well begun was half done, Stranleigh's political career had opened most auspiciously; but the phrase "half done" has more than one meaning, as Stranleigh was to learn next morning.

Ever since Corbitt's letter came into the hands of those responsible for the anti-peer campaign, Lord Stranleigh, his capable secretary, and even the dignified Ponderby, his lordship's valet, had been under strict espionage. The moment Blake developed his plan to the first man, that man, after listening and catching the drift of the scheme, apparently aided the secretary by supplying the addresses of numerous orators; but after Blake's departure there was quick work on the telephone. Headquarters was informed, and from there went out instructions to the whole list of those likely to be called on by Stranleigh's agents.

Next morning the anti-peer newspapers spread the news of the "vile plot," as they called it, over their pages and over Britain. Sign-board headlines, done in the biggest type by the blackest ink, blazoned the conspiracy of money to all the world. The headquarters staff of the anti-peer party completely misapprehended Stranleigh's intention. They never guessed that he purposed to deliver one or other of the speeches, but credited him with a foolhardy attempt to create an anti-peer corner in eloquence by purchasing from the speakers copyright in their lectures. The true villainy of the intrigue was made manifest when the newspapers explained the drastic nature of the Copyright Act.

If any public man who had sold the copyright in a speech used even a single sentence of that speech while addressing an audience, he was liable to prosecution. This practically sealed the mouths of twenty-one speakers, and so forth, and so forth. The articles were lavishly illustrated by snapshots showing Blake on his hurried taxicab tour—his getting out at one man's residence after another, and his final arrival at Stranleigh House with the loot. Pictures of the post-office orders were given, together with some appalling portraits of Lord Stranleigh himself, who, as reproduced by a rapid printing press, seemed capable of any scoundrelism.

For a week the controversy raged, and Stranleigh endured the experience of being called a knave by one half of the British Press, and a fool by the other half. Toward the end of the week it was evident that a new issue had arisen in British politics—namely, that when the Lords were done with, the millionaires would have to be taken in hand. The poor, dear, innocent British public was in danger of being corrupted by a multi-millionaire like Stranleigh.

Commercial virtue on the rampage is a potent force in Great Britain. Publicly, no man said a word in favour of Stranleigh; privately, many wished they had had a hand in his gold-bag while it was being held open.

Blake, as an old pressman, wrote half a dozen letters in explanation, intended for publication, but Stranleigh refused to sign them or allow them to be sent out.

"Don't you know a flood when you meet it?" he asked his secretary. "This is no 'come-in-out-of-the-wet' shower. Any explanation I could send out would be discredited, and, besides, I don't care a rap what people think of me. I have entered politics on a matter of principle. I'll do the best I can without flinching, and let the heathen howl.

"So, Blake, set out at once, and engage the biggest hall you can get hold of—the Crystal Palace, Albert Hall, Olympia, or anything that happens to be vacant next week. The writs may be out any day, and there's no time to lose. I'm going to deliver the best of those speeches, and I will tell the audience who wrote it, what I paid for it, and why. I'll tell them I want both cash and credit to go to the right man. Announce, by big advertisements in the papers on both sides of politics, that the Earl of Stranleigh, at such a hall and at such an hour, will address the public on the present political crisis."

Blake, who knew more than Stranleigh about political gatherings, protested against

this plan; and the moment it became public, all Stranleigh's friends wrote, telegraphed, telephoned, and endeavoured to see him and convince him of his folly, but without avail. No one would consent to be chairman, nor even to sit on the platform with him. So the chairs were cleared away, and the packed audience, just on the hour of eight, saw appear before them a well-set-up, good-natured-looking young man, arrayed most becomingly in a fashionable evening suit.

At first there was a Homeric burst of laughter, and then a roar, as if all the African animals Roosevelt had met gave simultaneous voice. Stranleigh stood there smiling, waiting for the hubbub to cease, but it grew louder and louder. Had the young nobleman been better versed in testing the temper of a public meeting, he would have recognised the ominous signs which indicated there was soon to be a tremendous row. His cool demeanour seemed to infuriate the huge audience, and most uncomplimentary epithets were hurled at him from all sides. Behind Stranleigh appeared a police officer, who was greeted with a roar of defiance.

"You must come with me," the officer shouted in his ear. "You can't get in a word to-night. They're going to rush the platform presently, and then we may have difficulty in saving you. Come along."

"Let them rush," replied Stranleigh. "If they won't listen, this is no country of free speech."

"Come along," insisted the officer. "There is no time for argument."

"Do you arrest me?"

"Certainly not."

"Then get off this platform. It belongs to me to-night."

The policeman disappeared; then, with an overwhelming tornado of sound, the mob surged toward the stage, rather impeded by its own compactness.

The first to reach the front was a stalwart, bullet-headed, thick-necked ruffian, with hair as closely cropped as that of a convict. Placing two enormous hands on the edge of the platform, he sprang up in front of Stranleigh; but before his equilibrium was complete, Stranleigh planted a well-directed blow square between the eyes, and the rioter, flinging up his hands, fell backwards with a crash on his followers. The sharp report of the impact cut the turmoil like a bullet, and was followed by dense silence.

"Send me up another!" shouted Stranleigh.

"You didn't give him a chance," retorted one of the crowd.

"What chance have I," cried Stranleigh, "against five thousand roughs, each one so cowardly that he daren't come alone? I've always understood there was fair play among the lower orders. Send me up your best man, if you dare."

The growl of hatred began again, but the great close-cropped bullet head on the thick neck became visible above the platform.

"A clean pat like that," bellowed the prize-fighter, "hurts no man. It was straight from the shoulder, too. What his lordship says is right; you're giving him no sporting odds." Then, turning his back on the now subdued audience, he said in a most respectful voice to Stranleigh—

"Will you let me get my feet on them boards?"

"Of course," cried the young man. "Give me your hand."

The pugilist, evidently a bit dazed, in spite of his brave words, held up his hand. Stranleigh grasped it, with a powerful pull hoisting him on the platform, then, without releasing his hand, he shook it cordially.

"Pleased to meet an honourable opponent," he said.

"Same to you, my lud." And there arose a hearty cheer, with no venom in it, succeeded by quick silence, all eyes intent on the stage. The pugilist threw off coat and waistcoat, and displayed himself in a woollen shirt, a leathern belt, and trousers.

"Going to strip, my lud?"

"No."

"Are you ready?"

"Yes."

Stranleigh got in the first blow and, quickly following it, the second. The other shook his head, as if a fly tormented him. Again his lordship tried to get in two strokes, but they were warded off. His opponent was measuring him.

Stranleigh had often met and defeated brute strength, but now he realised that planted so sturdily before him was brute strength augmented by great skill. Nevertheless, he delivered a terrible blow above the heart that caused his opponent to gasp and give ground.

The young Earl followed up his advantage with a relaxation of his customary caution, expecting to get in another blow before the rally, but the pugilist flung himself upon him. Stranleigh's feet rose from the platform, and then he fell full length on his back and lay motionless.

A wild yell from the audience was quickly checked by the upraised hand of the standing combatant. He seemed to exercise a sort of hypnotic influence over the mob, as he enunciated very slowly—

"One—two—three—four—five"—Stranleigh's prone head moved from one side to the other—"six—seven——" With a long-drawn-out sigh the prostrate man painfully rose to a sitting posture, and then uncertainly to his feet. A touch would have sent him over again.

"Had enough, my lud?"

"What did you say?"

"Had enough?"

The younger man smiled.

"Why, no!" He pronounced his words with a sort of precise selection, as if not quite sure of them. "Why, no! I take it we are just beginning."

"Good man! You don't mind if I fan you a bit?" But there was to be no fanning. With inexplicable suddenness, Stranleigh, whose dress-coat was split down the back, found himself surrounded by a dozen policemen.

"Sorry, my lord," said the officer, "but this time I must arrest you."

The storm of rage rising from that audience was unlike anything Stranleigh had yet heard. The police attempted to hustle their prisoner away, but the pugilist shouted—

"There's no danger! Stay where you are," he roared to the crowd, "and give a cheer for his ludship!" Then he thrust his way among the police, and grasped Stranleigh's hand.

"Pleased to have met you, my lud," he said, in the midst of the cheering. "Do you want me, too?" he asked the officer, who growled—

"Oh, we know where to find *you!*" And then Stranleigh disappeared from the political arena.

Very few of the British newspapers had a good word to say for Lord Stranleigh next morning, or even an excuse to offer for his conduct. The anti-peer journals were extremely bitter. Was this lunatic to be left longer at liberty merely because he was rich and possessed a title? First he had endeavoured, with the weight of money, to corrupt those pure angels of light, the speech-making politicians. Finding that impossible, he provoked a public display of brutality such as had not been seen in peace-loving England since the contest between Heenan and Sayers. They demanded that a stern example should be made of the brawler.

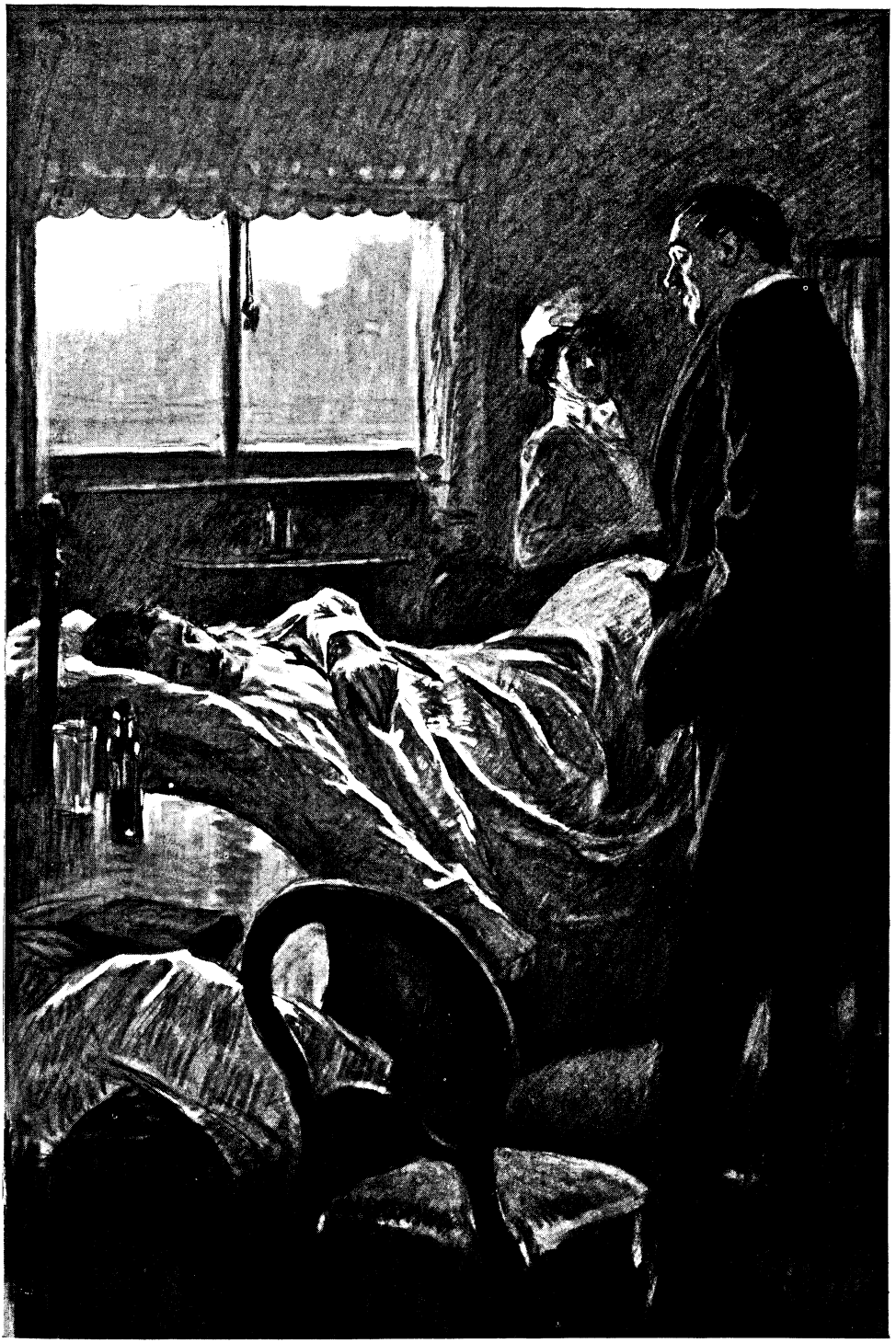
But, of course, everyone knew that no example would be made. The law is very lenient towards election rows. Were it otherwise, the courts would be kept busy for a year following an appeal to the people. Two days after Stranleigh's pugilistic contribution to the conduct of the Empire, the writs were issued for the General Election, and all well-wishers of the young nobleman breathed a sigh of deep relief. He was now prohibited by law from taking any part in the approaching struggle.

Yet so democratic was his lordship, and so anxious that the cause of the people should prevail, that he incurred the risk of a third interference, which shall be but briefly described. After the knock-out blow he had received, and his subsequent release on bail, our amateur politician, under the advice of his doctor, took a rest cure. It was the physician's hope that he would be able to keep Stranleigh in bed during the fortnight that the election lasted.

It is always unsafe to prophesy what Demos will do, and the polling of the first three days went decidedly against the Government, giving ominous signs of a landslide—signs the more disquieting because the Government itself had the choice of the constituencies contested, and naturally selected those supposed to be most favourable to the cause it represented.

On the first day, Stranleigh shook off his doctor; on the second, he made certain financial arrangements; on the third, carrying a small hand-bag, which he never allowed out of his possession, he entered his most powerful motor-car. With his favourite chauffeur in front, and Blake beside him in the back seat, he made for a manufacturing town in the north, where a prominent and plain-spoken member of the Cabinet was to hold forth that night on the political situation, in the largest hall the manufacturing town contained.

In the district surrounding this hall the streets were packed, and there was much difficulty in making progress with the automobile. In addition, the crowd was palpably in an ugly temper. Getting as near as possible to the stage entrance of the building, Stranleigh and Blake left the car, the former carrying his small hand-bag. At the door they were stopped, but the doorkeepers accepted Stranleigh's card, and sent it in to the committee room. It was promptly brought back by someone evidently in authority.



"'I feel,' said Stranleigh weakly, 'as if I had been sand-bagged.'"

"Which of you is Lord Stranleigh?" he asked.

"I am," answered the bearer of that title.

The name passed from man to man, running over the menacing mob like a zigzag flash of electricity.

"The right honourable gentleman refuses to see you, and, personally, I advise you to get away from here as speedily as you can. In the first place, you have no right to meddle with a political meeting, and, in the second place, our people here are less patient, gentle, and lamb-like than was your audience in London."

"Thank you for the warning," said Stranleigh. "I'll go away at once if you will take this bag to the Minister, ask him to open it in the privacy of his own room, examine the documents it contains, and, if he thinks they are of any use to him in this contest, to deal with them as he sees fit."

"What you suggest is impossible, my lord. The Minister declined to have any dealings whatever with you."

"Bash him!" roared the crowd, as the official disappeared, and bash him they did. The police were unable to save him on this occasion, but two of them dragged his senseless body into the motor-car, while others of the force kept back the throng as best they could. All the time Stranleigh's right hand clung to the handle of the small bag. The siren operated by the chauffeur more or less cleared a way for the automobile, and, at a good deal of risk to life and limb, he managed to get into a side street, and from thence to the hospital.

The nurses who attended Stranleigh listened to his ravings about the will of the people, which he seemed anxious should prevail, also about a million pounds in Bank of England notes that rested somewhere in a hand-bag.

One afternoon he came to his senses, and saw Blake standing beside his bed.

"Hello, Blake!" he said feebly. "How goes the election?"

"Oh, entirely to your satisfaction!" But Blake did not think it necessary to tell him that the contest had ended more than a week before.

"There was a little hand-bag, Blake——"

"That's all right," interrupted the secretary. "Its contents are in the Bank of England, and I hold the receipt. Now, you mustn't ask any more questions. How do you feel?"

"I feel," said Stranleigh weakly, "as if I had been sand-bagged."

Another complete episode in the eventful career of Lord Stranleigh, Philanthropist, will appear in the April Number.

A MARCH EVENING.

BARE branches, silver wet,
Reflected in the mere,
A belt of wood beyond,
Dun fields of homestead near.

Rim above rim they rise,
Those hills so far away,
Till merged in creeping shade,
Blue, purple, misty grey.

Untiring, effortless,
Spring's purpose in the air;
A wren a challenge makes,
A linnet pipes somewhere.

Gleams, glooms, and peace profound,
Evening and setting sun;
The children home from school,
The labourers' work is done.

Ever night's curtain falls,
The light fades in the west;
Veil upon veil enfolds,
And the world goes to rest.

ELIZABETH B. PIERCY.



THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ON DERBY RACECOURSE: THE START IN FRONT OF THE GRAND STAND.

CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNING.

BY FRED W. WARD ("PINEX").

Photographs by the Sport and General Press Agency.

WHEN England was badly beaten in the Olympic Marathon between Windsor and the Stadium, London, in 1908, the cry went up that we had lost, once and for all time, our athletic supremacy in long-distance events. Be that as it may, there is one thing remaining by which we may comfort ourselves—that is that a visitor has never won any of the great cross-country championships.

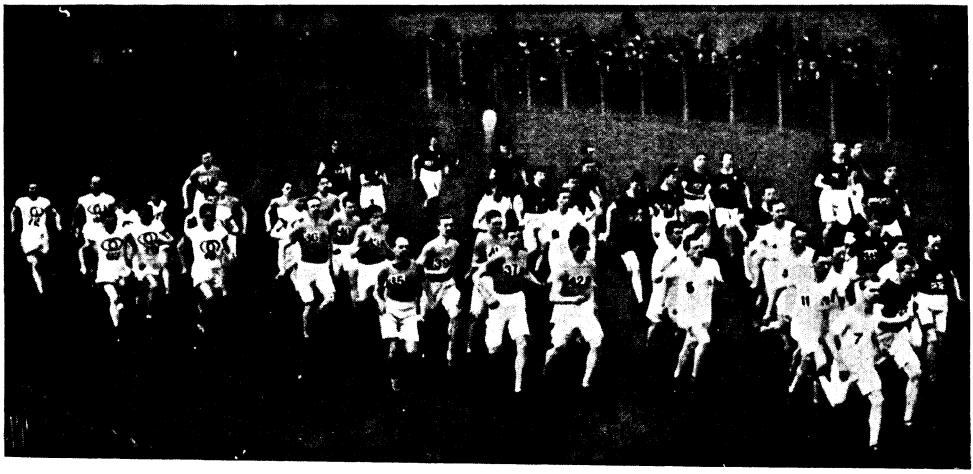
A Frenchman, certainly, ran second to our man in the National Cross-Country Championship in 1909 and 1910, and an American in 1898 carried off the Amateur Athletic Association's steeplechase; but at cross-country running we are still supreme, and, so far as can be seen, we are likely to maintain that supremacy.

Cross-country running is a pastime that appeals particularly to our youngsters. Scores of these lads have but scant opportunity of training, for they may be seen flitting through many of the London streets after night has fallen, but a curious fact is that the universities and public schools, despite the training at the latter, have yet to provide a champion. Good men have been turned out, but there has always been something lacking. Now, however, it may be hoped there may be an alteration, for both universities have this year seriously considered the entering of a team for the National Cross-Country Championship. If this is done, cross-country running will have received a fillip that will mean a great deal to it as a sport.

As regards public schools, steeplechases and cross-country runs—for there is a difference between these two events—find a place on the programme of the majority. According to history, Shrewsbury was first to start this game, while at Rugby cross-country running is practised as an occasional substitute for football during the Michaelmas term, and as a regular out-of-door exercise during a part of the Lent term.

A very methodical system, it is interesting to note, is pursued at this school. For house runs the boys are divided into senior and junior packs, and no racing is allowed; while the big side runs, being longer and more arduous, are restricted to the best runners in the school. Every new boy is examined by the school doctor, and, if unsound or delicate, he is not allowed to take any part in any of the runs.

Indeed, leave from home is necessary for the lads who take part in the big side events, while no boy under sixteen who is not perfectly sound in heart and lungs, and who has not already proved himself capable of sustained exertion, may run. These restrictions are necessary and, as will be agreed by all who have a practical know-



THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ON DERBY RACECOURSE: THE START.

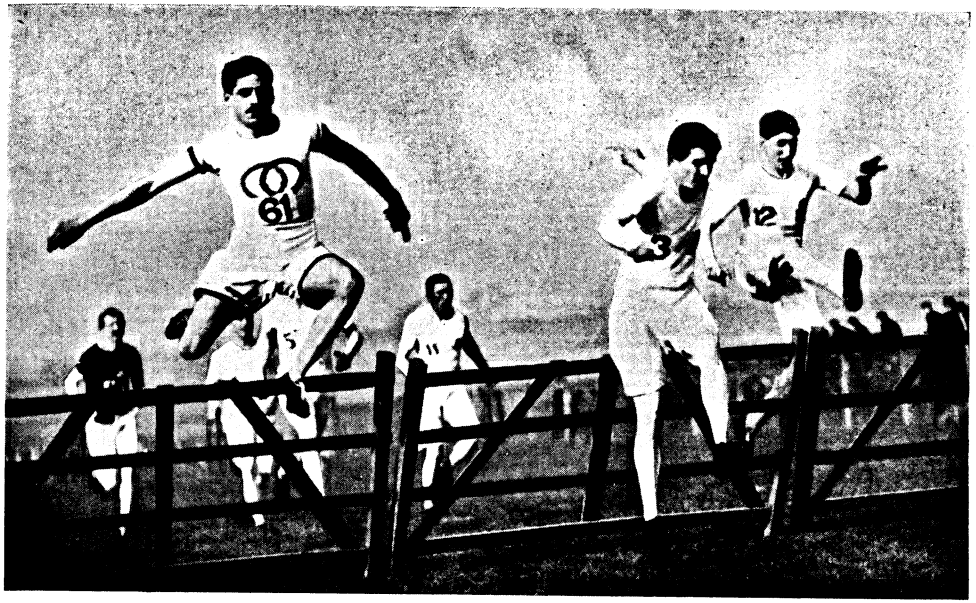
ledge of cross-country work, wise. A boy of fourteen or fifteen may easily have a promising athletic career spoilt by being asked to do too much at a too early age.

At Eton the boys do some hare-hunting with the beagles, and also have a cross-country race—the steeplechase, senior and junior—every year, the greatest enthusiasm being shown. Paper-chasing finds no place on their programme; cross-country work is far superior, and no obstacle is too big or too difficult for them.

One or two cross-country races are included as part of the sports at Sherborne, but at Blundells, that famous old school in the West of England, there is the "Russell" Steeplechase, founded in 1877 in memory of Parson "Jack" Russell, the sporting cleric. A huge crowd invariably gathers to watch the start and the finish of this race, which varies from five miles to seven miles in length, owing to difficulties with farmers, and the River Lowman is always crossed twice. This is a difficult



THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ON DERBY RACECOURSE: FIRST TIME ROUND THE CORNER, PASSING GRAND STAND.



THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ON DERBY RACECOURSE: OVER THE HURDLES, SECOND TIME ROUND.

matter during the rainy weather, while the event is made even more strenuous owing to the fact that a great part of it is run over very boggy country. Good times, however, have been made in these contests, for they have varied from thirty-three to forty-one minutes, not a big margin.

Curiously enough, there is very little cross-country running at Cheltenham, but it may be easily understood why there is nothing of



THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ON DERBY RACECOURSE: JUMPING OBSTACLE AT SHARON LANE. A. E. WOOD (WINNER) AND BOUIN (SECOND).

the kind at Westminster School. It is here that the difficulty over a suitable course is felt very severely. Little or no cross-country running is indulged in at Bradfield, and at Marlborough, beyond an occasional paper-chase, there is nothing in the way of running over field and fallow.

The case is very different at Uppingham, for there the boys have runs against Oxford and Cambridge, many practice runs across country, and also occasional paper-chases, while here, too, precautionary measures are taken in order to test the fitness of the lads. After reasonable practice, the house-masters knowing who run, they have a hard test of one mile across country, finishing at the house of the doctor, where each boy is carefully examined, passed as being fit, or refused leave to run again, as the case may be. This has been found to be quite the best method of making sure, or reasonably so, that none of the boys can come to any harm.



THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ON DERBY RACECOURSE: GETTING THROUGH THE FENCE NEAR THE RIFLE BUTTS. A. E. WOOD (ON LEFT), WINNER.

At Radley the cross-country running is organised on the basis of competitions between the various houses. There are two junior and two senior runs in the Lent term, the first ten or fifteen boys to finish getting marks in each, and the house with the highest aggregate—*i.e.*, lowest in point of arrival—wins the cup.

Another of the public schools at which precautions against accidents are taken is Clifton, where a great deal of cross-country work is indulged in during the first term of the year. Every boy takes part in this, excepting those who are certified as medically unfit. The school is also divided into four packs, in order to prevent any boy being asked to do more than he is fit for.



THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ON DERBY RACECOURSE: GOING THROUGH THE PLOUGH.



THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP AT EPSOM: THE TRAILERS GOING OUT TO LAY TRAIL.

The members of the fourth, or slowest pack, are confined to a very slow jog-trot, with an interval for walking every 300 or 400 yards, and, as an additional precaution, a master is invariably in charge. The other packs are also regulated in order to suit age and running capacity of the boys engaged, while it must not be supposed for a moment that every run partakes of the nature of a race.

Even in the upper pack, confined to the best runners, every boy being over sixteen years of age, there are frequent halts for walking. The open and under sixteen races take place only once a year, and great pains are taken to see that each competitor is in perfect health, is passed as such by the school doctor, and has run enough in practice to be in the best condition.

These runs, I may add, are a very old institution at Clifton, and are highly valued by the authorities as a means for teaching the boys pluck and perseverance. When safeguarded in the manner I have described, the improvement in the running of the boys in the course of a term is surprising.

Bedford and Haileybury are other schools at which runs are an institution, and Sedbergh has a famous "long run" across its surrounding fell country.

Oxford and Cambridge, as is common



THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP AT EPSOM: NEARING THE STANDS, FIRST TIME ROUND.



THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP AT EPSOM: COMING UP THE PLOUGH FIRST TIME.

knowledge, have their cross-country sections and their annual inter-'Varsity race, the latter being last year contested, on December 10, at Roehampton. As anticipated, the Oxonians scored a win, but that they would fill the first five places was certainly not expected. The winner, however, it is interesting to note, turned up in the Tasmanian scholar, Mr. A. W. Clewes, who, it will be recollected, "let up" Mr. R. E. Knight, from patriotic motives, in the race of the previous year.

He will be lost to Oxford this year, but it is hoped he may be heard of again. He couples a long, telling stride with admirable judgment, while Mr. R. T. May, the second Oxonian to finish, developed quite unexpected form in this race. It may also be pointed out that although Oxford won with ease, Mr. R. E. Garrod, the Cambridge captain, finished only 1 minute 44 seconds behind the winner. On this there is little between the form of the best men of the respective teams.

The cadets at the Royal Naval College, Osborne, and at Dartmouth, also include running over country amongst their other sports. But, as I have already pointed out, the universities and the public schools have yet to produce a champion.

Now, why is this? The Londoner has



THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP AT EPSOM: COMING OVER THE PLOUGH SECOND TIME.



THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP AT EPSOM: A. E. WOOD (WINNER) ENTERING THE COURSE FOR THE LAST LAP.

to travel many miles into the suburbs to gain any experience over country. In the majority of the bigger cities and towns in the provinces, the case is the same. Yet it is from the ranks of these clubs that the premier runners come. It may be—although I simply advance this as a theory—that the everyday life of the members makes them hard, wiry, and full of muscle. Taking the winners at the International



THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP: GETTING THROUGH WIRE FENCE.



ANOTHER SEASON'S SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP: GETTING THROUGH WIRE FENCE.



THE SOUTH OF THE THAMES CHAMPIONSHIP: THE START, NEAR CATFORD.

and the National Cross-Country Championships, Shrubb, Aldridge, Robertson, and Wood, in the former, are men who have lived open-air lives. So, too, have the majority of the winners of the "National." This, however, ought not to make the difference that is actually shown between the men whose names I have quoted and those who have represented their universities, but it does do so. To theorise upon this difference would lead to no useful result, but it is a curious fact that Oxford and Cambridge have yet to produce a man capable of beating the champions drawn from the harrier clubs of the United Kingdom and the Continent.

Another fact that may be noted, in connection with cross-country running, is that the champion must, like the poet, be really born, not made. A man may be educated up to the art of getting over the obstacles in the best way, but the knack has to be there in the first place. The successful runner is not the man who jumps everything that comes in his way. He must know how to fall over or wriggle through the obstacles, doing this in the manner calculated to get over the ground with the least expenditure of power and loss of time.

Shrubb and George Pearce may be cited as instances in point. The former, built like a greyhound, was an adept in getting over and through the obstacles that faced the field of runners. Pearce, on the other hand, although apparently somewhat more clumsy, was also great at wriggling through anything without losing more than a few seconds. Finesse also plays a great part in these cross-country contests, and unless a man keeps his head —well, he is quite likely to discover that he is in the middle of a crowd of runners just when he ought to be clear, and, as a consequence, he loses valuable time and distance—distance that he finds it difficult to make up.

A man must also of necessity know himself and his capabilities. Across grass the art of running is easy; over plough the weak spots of a competitor are found almost immediately. He has to depend entirely upon himself, he must know when and how to "nurse" himself, and it is from the ranks of these brainy runners that the champions spring.

Every little detail of a runner's dress, too, has to be carefully thought out. A loose or a broken shoe-string will wreck

his chances; too much or too little clothing will have the same effect. Cross-country running is not a thing to be lightly embarked upon; a man has to be trained to the hour on the day of the contest, and nothing has to be left to chance.

As regards the inception of the cross-country championships, Mr. Walter Rye tells the story in the Badminton Library.



THE SOUTH OF THE THAMES CHAMPIONSHIP AT GROVE PARK, KENT: THE END OF THE SECOND MILE.

"At the end of 1867," he writes, "a few members (of whom he was one) of the Thames Rowing Club, at Putney, conceived the idea of keeping themselves more or less in condition until rowing began again. The earliest arrangements of the Thames Handicap Steeplechase No. 1, as it was called, were primitive in the extreme, and, indeed, the whole affair was treated more as a joke than anything else.

"The competitors were taken up to the starting-place on Wimbledon Common—the edge of the Beverley Brook, by the bridge—in a 'bus, and had to dress how they could, and the race was run in the dark over about two



THE NORTH OF THE THAMES CHAMPIONSHIP AT WEMBLEY PARK: CROSSING A DITCH IN THE OPEN COUNTRY.



THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ON DERBY RACECOURSE: FILING OUT AFTER GOING THE FIRST FEW MILES.

and a quarter miles of the roughest and boggiest part of the common. . . . There were a dozen starters out of twenty entries.

"The next race was made an open event, and attracted over fifty entries and twenty-four starters. . . . Considerable interest was felt in this race from the fact that two or three old public schoolboys took part in it. But, as in most other sports, the native Cockney proved equal to the occasion, and early training did not have the effect of showing any superiority in the old boys over the Londoners.



THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP: G. C. L. WALLACK CLEARING AN OBSTACLE.

"There had been matches between teams of various clubs before 1876," Mr. Rye continues. "The Thames Hare and Hounds had two matches with the Gentlemen of Hampstead in November, 1870, but it was not till this year that the first real championship race was started.

"Next year a carefully laid out course was chosen—from Roehampton, over the common, by Merton and Morden, West Barnes, and Crooked Billet home—about eleven and three-quarter miles. The Thames Hare and Hounds won the first time, scoring thirty-five against the South London Harriers' fifty-eight and the Spartan Harriers' ninety-four, but the last-named club turned the tables on the others the next year."

Thus was the cross-country championship launched. To-day it is stronger than ever, and the runners of the United Kingdom are more than equal to the task of holding their own against all comers.

AUSTIN'S EMBARRASSED BUTLER.

By KEBLE HOWARD,

Author of "The Smiths of Surbiton," "The Whip Hand," etc.

"I THOUGHT you would have run down to see her before this," said Austin, trying hard to look aggrieved. (When I assure you that he was literally swollen with pride, you will realise what a dismal failure he made of the attempt. Austin has brought so many of his grievances to my rooms that it has become a habit with him to conjure up a sense of injury as he mounts the stairs. I should, perhaps, write "had," for this was the very last time that my unoffending body was to be used as a buffer between my young friend and his—well, let us say the world.)

"My dear chap," I replied, "I hardly realised that she was prepared to receive visitors at present."

"Prepared to receive visitors?" Austin chuckled. "They've been all round her like a swarm of bees for the last fortnight—hundreds of 'em!"

"You amaze me!"

"Flattering her no end, especially her toes. I'm given to understand she has the most perfect set of toes in the world."

"Oh!" It was my turn to chuckle. "You're talking about the baby?"

"Of course I am, you idiotic old duffer! Who else should I be talking about?"

"Quite so. Only I happened to be thinking of Celia, you see."

There was just a touch of reproof in my tone. Austin squirmed under it, as he always does.

"Well," he retorted, "you don't suppose I've forgotten her, do you?"

"That would be impossible," I said solemnly. "It would be equally impossible, at this time, of all times, for there to be any shade of misunderstanding between you."

"Precisely," replied Austin rather uneasily.

He rose from his chair, lit a cigarette, and took it across to the window. When you know people very well, you can generally tell what they are thinking about without seeing their faces. I was sure, from the set of Austin's shoulders, that he and Celia were holding different opinions on some point. This was a pity. Loath as I felt to hurl my unfortunate self into the breach, I decided, nevertheless, that I ought to do what I could—for the last time.

"Out with it," I said, laying my hand on his shoulder.

"Out with what?"

"Heaven knows!"

"Are you a Socialist?" he asked, turning on me with sudden defiance.

"Not a scientific one."

"That means that you sympathise, in a vague sort of way, as everybody does, with the lower classes."

"I hope it means a little more than that."

"Well, would you go out of your way to do something almost foolhardy, on the face of it, for the sake of your sentiments with regard to the lower classes?"

"That sounds rather like a quotation."

"Never mind what it sounds like. Would you or wouldn't you?"

"My dear Austin, I'm not going to commit myself by answering any question so indefinite. Give me a straightforward proposition, and I'll give you a straightforward answer."

"In strict confidence, mind!"

"Certainly."

"Would you engage an ex-convict as your butler?"

So this was it. They had differed over prison reform. Celia, of course, would be ready to yearn over the ex-convict, whilst Austin would have a natural and very proper regard for the wedding-presents, my set of handsome *entrée* dishes among them. I sincerely wished that he had settled the point for himself.

"What was his crime?" I asked carelessly.

But he was too quick for me. "Whose crime?"

"Didn't you say that you were thinking of engaging an ex-convict as your butler?"

"No. I asked you if you would."

"That depends upon what the man had

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done, and whether he had done it more than once."

"Suppose he were a burglar who had been convicted three times for stealing his employer's goods?"

"I'm afraid I should be inclined to think that he would do it a fourth time. You know yourself the force of habit."

"Celia," he continued, blandly ignoring my gentle suggestion, "has set her heart on taking an ex-convict and giving him a new start in life. As we have decided that we shall need a butler in our new house, that creates a vacancy for an ex-burglar."

"Couldn't you get another variety of convict—a nice ex-forger, for example?"

"There aren't any who have been brought up as butlers. They're generally bank clerks or something of that sort, and we've no vacancy for a bank clerk. We had an application from a man who had assaulted the police with violence on two or three occasions, but Celia couldn't fancy him, with the baby about. So it gradually worked round to Tily."

"What's he like? Have you seen him personally?"

"Oh, yes—two or three times. He's frightfully repentant, and all that. The prison chaplain swears by him. Says he made him librarian this last time, and never missed a single book."

"Books are not silver spoons," I said, meaning *entrée* dishes.

"That's just it. I put that point to the chaplain—quite a man of the world. He has a theory that the criminal instinct is a sort of microbe that gradually works right through the system, and then leaves the subject immune. He is confident that Tily is immune."

"And Celia agrees with him?"

"Absolutely. I never knew her so keen on anything. She says that, when we're so happy ourselves, it's our duty to make others happy, and that she'll never forgive me if I don't engage Tily."

"Then that settles it," I said. "In any case, it must be interesting."

II.

I WAS introduced to the new butler about three weeks later, having been asked to dine and sleep at the new house. There was no particular reason why I should stay the night, the train service being excellent up to a late hour. I raised no objection, however, realising, as I do, that it is one of a bachelor's duties to keep spare bedrooms well aired.

I took rather a fancy to Tily. He was a little man, grey-haired, very wiry, with a whimsical cast of countenance that denoted the philosopher. Had it not been for a certain furtiveness in his movements, and a watching look about the eyes, I should never have supposed that he had spent so many years of his life in convict prisons. I admired Austin and Celia as much for their enterprise as for their kindness of heart. It certainly adds a touch of excitement to life to let an expert cracksman loose in one's house. I was quite startled to notice how easily he solved the mysteries of the patent lock that fastens my suit-case.

I was then taken up to the nursery to see the baby.

"A strange contrast!" I murmured, having lied as much as I deemed necessary as to the marvellous beauty and stupendous size of the child.

"Contrast!" retorted Celia. "What d'you mean? She's the very image of me, isn't she, nurse?"

Nurse smiled. She was the very latest thing in nurses, and enjoyed her Nietzsche as she rocked the bassinet.

"One certainly detects the maternal influence in the facial formation," she said.

"I was not alluding to the appearance of the child," I explained, "but to her youth and innocence."

"Compared with whom?" asked Celia icily. "Austin? Myself? Nurse?"

"Good gracious, no—poor old Tily!"

Celia took the infant into her arms and held it tightly. "I think you're perfectly horrid!" she cried.

I never attempt to explain myself to young mothers. I simply slid out of the nursery and rummaged around for the new study.

"I'm glad you've come," said Austin. "I forgot to warn you that you must be very careful indeed what you talk about before Tily."

"Does he gossip?"

"Oh, it isn't that, but you can easily understand that there are some subjects on which he is very sensitive."

"You may rely upon my discretion."

"Good! And if you do happen to get on to dangerous ground, I'll just give you a warning kick under the table."

"Thanks very much," I said.

We were rather silent at first. I thought of twenty or thirty subjects that seemed safe enough, but the table was a small one, and I knew that Austin was keeping in touch with

the disposition of my ankles. With the first glass of champagne, however, the tension slackened.

"Have you," I asked, turning to Celia, "been doing much reading lately?"

"Not very much," she replied, frowning slightly. The next moment Austin's heel came down sharply on my toes.

"What's wrong with that?" I whispered as Tily retired to the sideboard with the fish.

"Librarian at Dartmoor!" hissed my host.

I thought it rather hard that they should be for ever debarred from talking about books in Tily's presence, not to say a little ridiculous. Still, perhaps it would be better to let somebody else introduce the next topic.

"Well, old man," said Austin presently, "what d'you think of the house now that you've seen it at last?"

"It's very nice," I said safely.

Celia pouted. "Is that all you have to say?"

I was about to make another equally fatuous remark, when I suddenly became aware that Tily was approaching me with one of my silver *entrée* dishes. From a peculiar movement of the forefinger of his left hand, I was sure that he was feeling for the little lion with the upturned tail.

"Ah," I observed in a casual tone, at the same time fixing him with a stern glance, "you still have them safely, then?"

"What?" asked Celia innocently.

"My silver *entrée* dishes." At the same moment I took the precaution to raise my feet high in the air. A second later, Austin's toe came into violent contact with the leg of my chair.



"'You still have them safely, then?'"

"What on earth did you say that for?" he muttered, when Tily was again out of hearing.

"It was only an ordinary remark."

"Under the circumstances, I call it simply brutal."

"But——"

"'S-sh!"

Very well. I determined to let them keep the conversation going as they could by themselves. Wild horses should not drag

another remark from me until dinner was over, and the wretched Tily had withdrawn to gloat over the goods of these foolish young people in the seclusion of his pantry.

Do you suppose, however, that they would leave me alone? Not a bit of it.

"Have you been to the theatre lately?" asked Celia.

"Not very lately," I said, shutting my mouth with a snap.

"What did you see last?"

"Quite forget."

"I don't think you do, really. Won't you tell me?"

I shook my head. If Austin kicked me again, I was determined to get up and punch his head. A long silence followed—so long that even Tily began to get nervous. Noticing this, my democratic young host endeavoured to set the butler at his ease by drawing him into the conversation.

"Are you fond of the theatre, Tily?"

"Yes, sir, thank you, sir."

"What sort of plays do you generally patronise?"

"Well, sir, I like a good drama now and again."

"We often have dramas down here," said Celia kindly. "Is there one this week, Tily?"

"Yes, madam, I believe there is."

"If you would like to go to it, just let us know, you know."

"Thank you very much, madam."

It was in vain that Austin cleared his throat and tapped his fingers on the table. Celia was engrossed with herself as a reforming angel. You will remember, moreover, that she had not been out of doors for some little time.

"What is it called, Tily?" she persisted sweetly.

"'The Ticket-of-Leave Man,' madam," said Tily.

III.

CELIA went to bed early.

Austin and I, on the other hand, sat up till well after midnight, discussing the Tily problem, the education of girls, and Austin's excellent taste in pictures and furniture. He had made a very snug den for himself at the top of the house, where the man's den should always be. Tily brought up the whisky and syphon about ten o'clock, and was told that his services would not be required further that evening. Having wished us both a respectful "Good night," he withdrew with a rather strange look upon his face—a look that puzzled me.

"Where does he sleep?" I asked.

"On the ground floor. Why?"

"Anybody else sleep on that floor?"

"No."

"He has it all to himself, then?"

"Absolutely."

"Isn't that rather risky?"

"Of course it's risky. That's why we did it. Celia said it would be no test at all to put him upstairs, because it would be so difficult for him to get out without being heard."

"I shall begin to think you're very heavily insured against burglary."

"Is that a joke?"

"Yes."

"Thanks. As a matter of fact, though, we're not insured against burglary at all. I thought of it at once, of course, but Celia wouldn't hear of it. She said it would not only be taking a very mean advantage of the insurance people—as though anyone ever did take advantage of insurance people!—but would also look rather funny if anything happened."

"I'm inclined to agree with her. By the way, I don't wish to make you uneasy, but did you notice Tily's expression to-night?"

"When—at dinner?"

"No, when he went out of the room after bringing up the whisky?"

"What was the matter with it?"

"That's just what I can't make out. It was weak and yet determined, excited and yet mournful. I've been wondering ever since what it meant."

"You're getting morbid," said Austin peevishly.

"Not at all. It's your property, not mine."

"You needn't remind me of that."

"My only anxiety is for Celia. In her weak state of health, any sudden alarm or noise might have a permanently injurious effect on her nerves. And then there's the baby, remember."

"Look here, are you amusing yourself at my expense? Because, if you are, I call it just about as rotten form as anyone could imagine!"

"My dear Austin, surely you can see that I'm speaking quite seriously. In my opinion, it was a great mistake to engage the man at all at this particular juncture. However, having engaged him, the only thing is to be prepared for an emergency at any moment. Have you made up your

mind, for example, what you would do if you caught him in the act of robbing you?"

"Oh, yes, we've discussed all that. My idea was to spring at him, seize him in my arms, hurl him to the floor, jump on top of him, and hold him there, with his nose pressed to the boards, until somebody fetched a policeman."

"A nice quiet method," I commented.

"Effective, anyway."

"What did Celia think of it?"

"Nothing at all. She said that would be brutal, animal, and degrading. (You can get a lot of adjectives like that from some society, you know, by just sending a post-card.) The proper course to adopt, in her opinion, would be to take him aside and reason with him, gently and lovingly, until he came to a better frame of mind. I pointed out that Tily might not stay to be reasoned with, and then Celia cried, and said I was taking advantage of her weak state of health."

"Your position in the matter is very difficult," I replied. "A middle course, perhaps, would be best. Catch hold of him first and reason with him afterwards."

"Right O!" said Austin, with a tremendous yawn.

IV.

I HAD undressed, and was sleepily cleaning my teeth before rolling into bed, when Austin reappeared.

"Hush!" he said, closing the door behind him very softly.

"My dear chap, what's the matter?"

"The rummiest thing you ever heard of. He's got the table laid as if for a banquet!"

"*Banquet? Who has?*"

"Tily. I've been watching him for five minutes. I think he must have gone off his dot. I sneaked down just to see that everything was all right. Blessed if the dining-room wasn't ablaze with light! The door was ajar, and I peeped in. I tell you the table looks magnificent, and he's walking round and round, touching first one thing and then another, like a miser counting his gold. Come and have a look at him!"

"But what's the idea?"

"Heaven knows! Quietly, remember!"

As we tiptoed through the hall, I slipped an overcoat over my pyjamas—for the night was none too warm—and turned up the collar. Then we crept along to the door of the dining-room.

The scene was exactly as Austin had described it. There was no food on the table, but it was loaded with everything in the way of silver and silver plate that Austin and Celia possessed. My *entrée* dishes, polished until it almost dazzled you to look at them, stood in a row on the sideboard. On the table itself there were candlesticks, three complete sets of fish knives and forks, salt-cellars galore, dozens of spoons, half a dozen egg-boilers, a tantalus, and the other costly articles too numerous to mention. The array was not, perhaps, in the very best of taste, but it was certainly imposing.

And over it all hovered the gloating Tily. The peculiar expression that I had observed earlier in the evening was still there, but intensified. His fingers worked incessantly; I had never before seen anybody so passionately interested in other people's goods. He was wearing felt slippers, so that he did not make a sound as he slid over the floor. One realised that he must have given up a very good position in the burgling world.

Quite suddenly an explanation of the whole spectacle occurred to me. Drawing Austin back to the hall, I whispered, doubtless excitedly: "Now's your chance!"

"Chance for what?"

"To settle the matter under dispute. That man is walking in his sleep."

"D'you think so?"

"I'm sure of it. Didn't you notice the glazed expression in his eyes?"

"Yes, I think they were a bit glazed."

"They were very glazed. I'm quite certain he's asleep; there's no other explanation of such strange conduct. Now, they say that, when people are walking in their sleep, they'll answer truthfully any question that you like to ask them. It's about the only time, I suppose, that you can be quite certain of getting people to speak the truth. I suggest that you confront him straightaway, and ask him if he has any intention of stealing your property. Then you'll know."

"And suppose he doesn't happen to be asleep?"

"But he is, I tell you!"

"Well, then, since you're so sure, why don't *you* confront him?"

We stood there for a little, staring at each other very hard. It was a dramatic moment. At last I said: "Are you afraid?"

"No," said Austin, "but my first duty is to my wife and child."

I might have known that he would let me in for it. I shrugged my shoulders and buttoned up my overcoat.

"Very good," I said calmly.

I forget whether we shook hands. It is quite likely; the most level-headed men become slightly theatrical at such a moment.

I waited until Tily had his back to the door. He paused to stoop over the table and finger something. That was my cue. Crossing the floor as noiselessly as himself—for I had nothing on my feet but socks—I said: "Tily!"

I cannot remember all that happened after this, but I know what came next. He faced round like a flash, and I knew in that instant that he was no more asleep than I was myself. A moment later I was on my back on the carpet, my arms held down by Tily's knees, and his fingers at my throat. I was exceedingly angry with Austin, as you may imagine.

Then I heard Tily say in a whisper: "You fetch a policeman, sir! I'll see that he don't wake the baby."

"Nonsense!" replied Austin. "Get up at once, Tily! That's my friend you've got there!"

Tily was not convinced. It seemed a long time before the grip on my throat slackened.

"Well, I'm blest!" he said at last. "I'm sure I beg your pardon, sir!"

I got up from the floor. There were no bones broken, but my dignity had suffered a serious shock. The whole affair, indeed, began to appear to me outrageous. When one consents to dine and sleep the night at a friend's house, one scarcely expects his butler to behave in this eccentric and familiar fashion.

"Beg my pardon?" I retorted. "I should hope you do! What d'you mean by it?"

Tily hung his head. "I made sure as you was after the stuff, sir. I didn't recognise you in that get-up. I expect I was a bit startled. I can only hope that you'll overlook it, sir."

"That," I replied stiffly, "is for Mr. Grain to decide."

Tily looked at Austin. "I should like to be allowed to say a word, sir, if you'd be so kind."

"Well?"

"I know I've no right to be burning your lights at this time of night, sir, but I did it all for the best. I wanted to be quite sure, sir, that I was fit to remain in your service. There are two ways of dealing with temptation—one way is to flee from it, the other is to fight and overcome it. I may tell you, sir—and I know you won't take it amiss—that I've had one or two pretty sharp tussles since I took on this job. It wasn't hardly fair, sir, if you'll allow me to say so, to put me on the ground floor. I may as well make a clean breast of it. I begun to pack these things into a bag on Tuesday night."

"Oh, you did, did you?"

"Yes, sir, but I won the battle. And this was the last bout—take my word for that, sir. I made it as difficult as I could for meself; you can see that. It was a pretty fair test, sir, but I'd got meself well in hand. If that gentleman hadn't acted as he did, I should have been a happy man from this night forward. As it is, I suppose I shall have to go. Well, that's luck, that is!"

"No," said Austin, "you won't go, Tily. If anything could have convinced me of your loyalty and honesty, it would be the fine way you sprang at my friend. You stay with me, Tily."

"I'm sure I'm very, very grateful, sir. You shan't have cause to repent of your kindness. Should I—should I clear away, sir?"

* * * * *

There is a limit to all things—even to the uses of a bachelor. In the morning I explained this, quite calmly and lucidly, to Celia and Austin. We were in the nursery at the time, whither I had been taken to say "Good-bye" to the baby.

"But that's too bad of you!" protested Celia, with her prettiest air. "What in the world shall we do when we quarrel?"

For answer, I led them across to the bassinet and placed them one on either side of it.

"There's your new buffer," I said.

THE TIGER OF THE SEA.

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS,

Author of "Neighbours Unknown," "Kings in Exile," "The House in the Water," etc.

THROUGH the broad, indolent, green-purple swells, ruffled and crisped along their tops by a mild breeze, the cow orca went wallowing contentedly, her calf swimming close at her side. From time to time it rubbed against her, as if apprehensive in face of the vast and perilous spaces of the ocean, and seeking covert behind her short powerful flipper. And from time to time, being one of the most devoted and assiduous of all the mothers of the wild, she would gather it caressingly to her side with that great flipper, or, whirling half around, touch it inquiringly with her enormous rounded snout.

She was a good nineteen or twenty feet in length, the great orca—or "killer whale," as she would have been dubbed by any sailor or fisherman who might have chanced to cast eyes upon her. She would have been recognised at once, from all the other members of her whale-and-porpoise tribe, by the immense dorsal fin, not far from five feet high, rising erect from the broad and massive black curve of her back, by the two conspicuous white streaks on her black flank, and by the sharply defined line of her cream-white belly as she rolled lazily on the slope of a swell. All these were danger signals, which the knowing would have taken care to heed.

Little cause for apprehension had the calf of the orca, as long as it kept near its mother. For this most swift and savage of all the cetaceans feared nothing that swam, except her giant cousin, the cachalot, or sperm-whale. Though but twenty feet long, she would attack and kill, through the sheer ferocity of her fury, the great whalebone or "right" whale, of fully four times her length and many times her bulk. Man she might have feared, had she ever learned his power; but, being poor in blubber, her tribe had never tempted man to so difficult and perilous a hunting. There were sharks, to be sure, that might equal or surpass her in size, but none even to approach her in savagery, speed, or cunning. It was in care-free content, therefore, that she lazed onward through the bland, untroubled sea, heedless alike of the surf on the yellow cliffs to her right, and of the empty spaces of ocean to her left. Such attention as she could spare from the baby charms of her calf was given to searching the transparent deeps below her, where lurked the big squid and sluggish, bottom-feeding fish on which she habitually preyed.

Suddenly, with no sound but a vast sucking gurgle as the waters closed above her, she dived. Far down in the obscurity she had caught sight of a pallid, sprawling form. It was an octopus, which had been so ill-advised as to leave its customary home among the rocks of the bottom, and seek new feeding-grounds. Before it had time even to attempt escape, the great jaws of the "killer" engulfed it. For one moment its eight long tentacles writhed desperately, clutching at its captor's lips. Then they vanished, sucked in and swallowed at a gulp. Thereupon the orca sailed leisurely back to the sunlit surface, met on her way up by her anxious calf, which had not been quite quick enough to follow its mother's lightning descent. She had not been two minutes absent, and never for an instant out of sight, but the youngster's instinct warned it well that the mild blue element in which it dwelt was full of dangers.

The octopus, though a large one, had been but a mouthful for the great killer, a stimulus, merely, to her vast appetite. She journeyed now with a keener eye upon the depths. Presently the deep blue-green of the water began to change to a lighter, beryl hue, where a line of making reef came up to within some thirty feet of the surface, and caught the sun. Here, basking, lay a broad, flat, bat-like creature, with wing-fins a dozen feet across, and a long whip-like tail. Its cold moveless eyes, staring upward, caught sight of the killer's body, slowly cleaving the surface. With an almost imperceptible movement of the black wings, it slid from

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the reef and plunged for refuge in the depths.

But the giant ray had not been quick or stealthy enough to evade its enemy's eye. Again the orca dived, this time without heed of silence, and so swiftly that her broad flukes, rising straight into the air, came down upon the water with a report that resounded all the way in to shore. Her descent was straight as a plummet. The ray, seeing it, was seized with panic. It darted to one side, and shot upward again, at a terrific pace, on a magnificent sweeping curve. With the force of that uprush it hurled its whole black, shuddering bulk clear into the air, where it turned, and for one instant hung flopping darkly, as if the very madness of its terror had driven it to the conquest of a new element. To the nervous calf it was a prodigy of horror, blotting out the sun. But this violent excursion into the air was of only a second or two's duration, and futile as it was brief. As the flat black wings came down again, with an enormous splash, the pursuing orca arose almost beneath them, seized them, and dragged them under. There was no fight, the ray being powerless against its mighty adversary—only a moment's blind, frantic struggle in the foaming swirls, and then a spreading stain of red on the green sea.

This, now, was a fully sufficing meal, even for such an appetite as the orca's; and many neglected fragments of it went spreading and sinking away to feed the innumerable scavenging crabs that lurked in the weeds and hollows of the sunken reef. The orca, for the next half-hour or so, remained where she was, rolling contentedly in the bright water above the reef, nursing and caressing her calf, and digesting her meal. Then she slowly continued her journey, but slanting in toward shore till she was not more than half a mile from the chain of precipitous islets and broken promontories which fringed this dangerous coast.

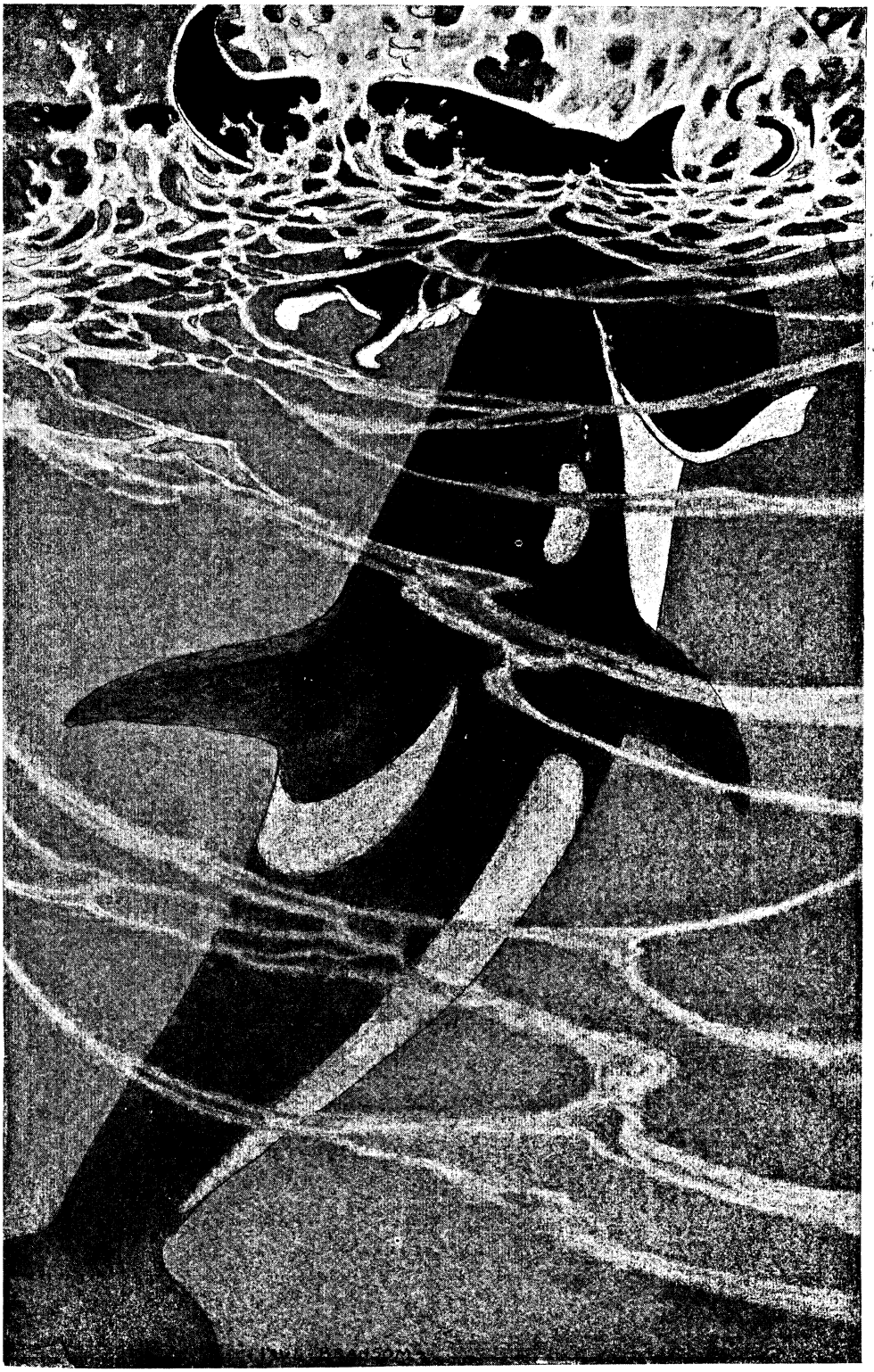
It was now full noon, and the unclouded sunlight, striking almost straight downward upon the surface of the sea, revealed the bottom at an amazing depth. Poised about half-way down the glimmering transparency, a large squid, or cuttle-fish, was swimming at leisure. His narrow, tapering body was about six feet in length, and perhaps twelve or fourteen inches in diameter at the broadest part, which was the head. From this formless head, seeming to sprout from it as leaf-stalks from a carrot, grew a bunch of tentacles, ten in number, and of about the same length as the body. Body and tentacles alike were of a pallid, dirty yellow-grey, with brownish spots—a colour that made its wearer almost invisible in that sun-penetrated sea. The progress of the squid was backwards; and he achieved it, not by moving his tentacles, but by sucking a volume of water into a great muscular sac beneath the tentacles and forcibly expelling it again. It looked as if he were breathing water and using it to blow himself along.

The orca was by no means hungry so soon after the feast which she had made on the giant ray, but the succulent morsel of the squid was a temptation not to be resisted. Tipping smoothly, her huge but finely modelled black-and-white form shot straight downward through the shimmering flood. But before she could reach him, the squid looked up and saw her. On the instant his ten loose tentacles tightened to a rigid bundle which offered no obstruction to his progress; his pale sides contracted with a mighty convulsion, expelling a volume of water which shot him along with the speed of a torpedo from its tube; and at the same time, from a gland within the propulsion sac, he squirted forth a jet of inky fluid, which spread at once into a great cloud of black, veiling his flight. Behind that concealment he changed his direction, and fled downward toward a deep crevice in the rocky bottom, where he knew that the jaws of his enemy would not be able to reach him.

The orca, undeterred, plunged straight onward into the inky cloud. But once well within that gloom she lost all track of her intended prey. She also, for the moment, lost herself. This way and that she darted, snapping her vast jaws ravenously, but in vain. They closed on nothing but the empty and tainted water. At last, and quite unexpectedly, she emerged from the blackness into the transparent green, and, glancing upward, saw a sight which caused her to hurl herself madly to the surface with a titanic sweep of her great flanks. That furious stroke made the depths boil like the thrust of a liner's propellers.

The calf, having started to follow its mother into the depths, had been frightened by that inky cloud into which it had seen her vanish. Returning in a flurry to the surface, it was swimming around aimlessly and anxiously, when it caught the eye of a wandering shark.

The shark, knowing very well what it was, looked around for the mother. He had no desire to be uncivil to a mother orca; but



"Only a moment's blind, frantic struggle in the foaming swirls."

there was no mother in sight. He did not understand it; but he was ragingly hungry, and such an opportunity was quite irresistible. He rose at the calf with a rush, and turned over on his side, exposing his livid-white belly, to seize the prize. The calf, appalled at the black, triangular, many-toothed cavern which gaped so suddenly before him, writhed away just in time, and began swimming in a big circle around the spot where its mother had dived.

Again the shark rushed; but he had to turn on his side to bring his curious under-set jaws into play, and the calf of the orca had already the nimbleness of its tribe. Again the attack failed. Before he could repeat it, he caught sight of the mother shooting up from the green depths. Though he was some twenty-five feet in length—a good five feet longer than the orca—he turned and fled for his life.

One glance assured the mother that her little one was unhurt. Then she darted after the aggressor at a pace which made his flight quite futile. He had not gone fifty yards when she was upon him, open-jawed. Hurling himself convulsively aside, he just succeeded in evading that first resistless charge. With the courage of desperation he twisted himself about, turned half over, glided beneath his adversary's belly, and caught at her with his triangular jaws. But she had already swerved, and he failed to get a fair hold. He did, indeed, rend out a mass of hide and blubber, but he reached no vital point, and the raging killer hardly felt the wound. Whirling with a violence that sent the foam and spray spurting into the air, she caught the base of the shark's tail between her immense jaws.

As far as anything like a fight was concerned, this was the end of it. For several minutes the gigantic struggle went on, dashing the discoloured water yards high; but it was all on one side, as the orca shook and crushed and tore the life out of her beaten opponent. At last she drew off, leaving a mangled mass to sink slowly into the depths. Then, having snuggled the excited calf under her fin, and given him to nurse, she swam slowly inland toward the deep channel which here ran between the islands and the shore, where she thought she might find some more of those succulent squid to compensate her for the one which had so inconsiderately evaded her approaches.

The breeze, which up to now had been little but a succession of cat's-paws, now settled into a steady draught, though not strong enough to do more than darken the surface of the sea to a heavy purple. Running free before it, up along the coast, between the cliffs and the islands, came a small cat-boat, its one sail sparkling white in the clear sunshine.

The tiny craft contained two passengers—the man at the helm, smoking a big briar pipe, and a silky brown retriever curled up at the foot of the mast. It was a stern coast and a dangerous water for such a cockleshell to traverse; but the man was a good amateur navigator of small craft, and he knew that between the port which he had left, some fifteen miles back down the coast, and the harbour which he was making for, a dozen miles to the north, there were plenty of refuges wherein he could take shelter in case a sudden storm should blow up out of the east. These waters were unfamiliar to him, but he had a good chart; and this was his special delight—the coasting of unknown shores, with no companionship but that of his faithful and accommodating dog, who always agreed with him as to the most interesting places to visit.

But though Gardner was an expert yachtsman, with an eye wise to all signs of the weather, and an instinct that could feel the pulse of the wind through tiller or taut sheet, he knew something less of natural history than was desirable for one who made his playground on the peopled seas. His notions of all the whale tribe and their varying characters were based on what he had read of the great timorous whalebone whale, and what he had seen of the merry and harmless porpoise. When, therefore, he caught sight of the arched black back and formidable head of the orca, lazily ploughing the swells, it never occurred to him that now was the time for discretion. Had he been an *habitué* of these waters, he would have turned his prow promptly in another direction, lest the orca should think he wanted to intrude upon her privacy. As it was, however, he sailed nearer, to see what manner of fish or beast it might be, this black-and-white creature that treated his approach with such indifference.

Passing at a distance of eighty or a hundred yards, Gardner was seized with a fool idea. This was a good chance for a shot. The unknown beast would form an interesting trophy. He did not stop to consider what he should do with it if he bagged it. He did not stop to consider that with his light rifle he could not hope to do

more than inflict a painful wound through the layers of blubber which would protect the vitals of this sea-monster. He did not know, either, that a dead whale sinks to the bottom, and that therefore the most successful shot could bring him no reward. It was enough that the instinct to kill something was upon him. He flung a knee over the tiller to keep his course steady, snatched up the rifle, and fired at a spot just behind the orca's big flipper—somewhere about where he judged the heart would lie. As he did so, the dog, realising that there was some excitement afoot, sprang up, put his fore-paws on the gunwale, and barked furiously at the strange black shape there rolling in the swell.

To Gardner's astonishment, the monster itself made no immediate response to the shot, but instantly, just under its flank, there began a wild commotion. Something there fell to threshing the water frantically, and the monster, swinging about, gazed at that something with great and anxious concern. She stroked it with her flipper, as if trying to calm it; and then Gardner saw that it was the young of the monster that he had struck. At this he felt full of remorse. Had he seen the calf, he would not have fired at either parent or little one. He was not wantonly cruel, but only thoughtless. For a few seconds he stared irresolutely. Then, judging from its actions that the calf had received a mortal wound, he decided that he ought to put it out of its misery. Taking very careful aim, he fired again. The report echoed sharply from the cliff-face of an island not a hundred feet away.

Gardner had made a good shot this time. Before the echoes of the report had died out, the calf lay still, and then very slowly began to sink. There was stillness for a few seconds, broken only by the excited barking of the brown retriever. The orca swam slowly half around the body of her young, and apparently assured herself that it was dead. Then she turned her small eyes upon the boat. It was only for an instant, but in that instant Gardner realised that he had made a hideous mistake. Instinctively he headed the boat for the rocky islet.

As he jammed the tiller over, at the same time hurriedly freeing his sheet, he saw the water boil about the orca's black form. She was a good hundred feet away, but so appalling was her rush that she seemed to be upon him in the same instant. With a yelp the dog sprang far up into the bow. As the boat was at that moment broadside on to the terrific attack, Gardner kept his seat, and fired another desperate shot full in the face of the oncoming doom. He might as well have fired a pea-shooter.

The gun dropped to his feet. In the same moment it was as if an express train had struck the boat. She was lifted bodily from the water, and all one side crushed in, while Gardner felt himself hurled clean over the boom. As he came down, he heard a yelp from the brown retriever.

In order to escape entanglement in the sail, which slapped sousing over on top of him, Gardner dived, and came up some fifteen feet beyond. To this dive, and to the momentary concealment afforded by the sail, he doubtless owed his life. He was a crack swimmer, and instantly started for the island at sprinting speed, doing the "crawl" stroke, with head most of the time under water. The orca at first did not observe his escape. The unhappy dog, by his barking, had caught her eye, and him she had seized and crushed the instant he was thrown into the water. Then, turning her fury upon the wreck of the boat, she had torn it and smashed it to kindling wood, seizing it in her huge jaws and shaking it as a terrier shakes a rat. This done, she had turned toward the island, and her deadly eyes had fallen upon the form of the swimming man as he cleft his way shoreward.

Her rush was like the rush of a torpedo; but Gardner was already laying his frantic hands upon the ledge. The ledge—a shelf not a dozen inches in width—was just awash. He felt that it was no refuge. But at about his own height above him was a niche in the rock, whimsically gouged out as if to hold a statue. With desperate agility he drew himself up into the tiny retreat, whipping up his legs behind him, and shrinking as flat as possible into the niche. At the same moment he was deluged with foam and spray, as with a dull crash the body of his pursuer struck the rock just below his feet.

Gardner shuddered, and struggled gaspingly to catch back his breath into his labouring lungs. He had swum many races, but never one like that. Turning cautiously, and keeping himself still flattened like a limpet to the back of the niche, he stared down, trembling lest the avenger should essay another such mad leap, and with better effect.

But the orca did not seem disposed to try it again. The shock of her impact had been terrific, and must have more or less driven

the breath from her body. She was now swimming slowly to and fro before the rock, a grim and dreadful gaoler. Gardner looked down into her cold little eyes, and shivered at the intelligent and implacable hate that flamed in them.

When he found himself sufficiently recovered to consider his situation, he was forced to acknowledge it a rather desperate one. Reaching outwards and upwards as far as he could, his hands found no protuberance of the rock by the aid of which he might hope to climb out of his niche and so make his way to the top of the cliff. He had no way of judging how long his vengeful gaoler might remain on duty; but from the magnitude of the wrong he had done her, the business-like method of her patrol, and the effective fury which she had shown in her attack, he had little reason to hope that she would soon tire of her office. In those teeming seas, as he knew, she could find plenty to eat without forsaking her post. But if those seas were teeming with sea-life, he reflected ruefully that they were at the same time rather barren of ships. The coasting schooners were apt to give that part of the coast a wide berth, owing to its sunken reefs and awkward currents. His island, to be sure, was little more than half a mile from shore—an easy enough swim for him under ordinary circumstances. But, even with his gaoler out of the way, he had no relish for running the gauntlet of the giant sharks which haunted the island channels. Exposed as he was to the full glare of the sun—the rock around him was uncomfortably hot beneath his hands—he wondered how long it would be before heat and thirst would so overcome him that his legs would crumple under his weight, and he would topple forward into the jaws of his waiting foe. On this point, however, he was presently somewhat reassured, as he noted that the sun would very soon pass over the shoulder of the cliff and leave him in the shade. As far as the heat was concerned, he would be fairly secure until the next morning. But then, if the weather should continue fine, how would he endure the long intolerable blaze of the forenoon, before the sun should again go over the cliff? He began to pray for storm and shrouded skies. But here he stopped himself, realising his dilemma. If storm should come, it was likely at that season to come out of the south-east; and in such event the first rising seas would lick him from his perch. He decided hastily that it was best to make his prayer a general one, and hazard no dangerous suggestions to Providence.

Fumbling instinctively in his pocket, he drew forth his soaked and sopping tobacco-pouch and a box of wet matches. The latter included some wax vestas, and he had a dim hope that these, if carefully dried and properly coaxed, might perhaps be induced to light. He spread them out, with the tobacco, on the hot rock between his feet. He had lost his pipe in the catastrophe, but he had letters in his pocket, and with these, when dried, he planned to roll cigarettes. The enterprise gave him something to do, helping him to pass the weary afternoon. But in the end he found that none of the matches would afford him so much as a splutter. Angrily he threw their futile remnants into the sea.

Night fell suddenly, as always in those latitudes, and the moonlight enchanted the long swells to the smoothness of glass. All night the orca swam backwards and forwards before the rock, till the changeless monotony of her movements began to hypnotise her prisoner, and he turned his eyes to the cliff-face to escape its influence. He was in deadly fear of dropping to sleep in his weariness, and falling out of the niche. His legs were giving way beneath him, and there was not room in the niche for him to sit down, or even to crouch with any comfort. At last, in desperation, he decided to take the risk of letting his legs hang over the edge, where his enemy could reach them if she should dare another of her wild leaps into the air. The moment he seated himself in this position she swam nearer and eyed him with unutterable malignancy. But she did not attempt to repeat her flying rush. It was plain to Gardner that she had no relish for such another violent concussion with the rock.

At last the interminable night wore itself away. The moon had long disappeared over the cliff, when the velvet purple of the sky began to thin and chill, the stars to pale and fade. Then the measureless splendour of an unclouded tropic dawn broke over the sea, and the shining plane of the waters seemed to tilt downward to meet the sun. Gardner gathered all his weary strength to face the fiery ordeal that he felt to be before him.

The better to fortify himself against it, he took off his light coat, and, by the aid of some pieces of cord which he found in his pockets, he lowered the garment and drenched it well in the sea. The orca

darted in to see what he was doing, but he drew up the dripping coat before she could seize it. He felt that this idea was nothing less than an inspiration, for, by keeping his head and body well drenched, he would be able to endure almost any heat, and might at the same time, by absorption, hope to ward off for a time the extreme torments of his thirst.

As the relenting Fates decreed, however, his trial was presently to be ended. Along about nine o'clock in the morning, from somewhere behind the island came throbbing on the still air a harsh, staccato *chug—chug—chug—chug*, which was to Gardner's ears the divinest of melodies. In an instant he had stripped his light shirt over his head and was holding it in eager hands. A moment more, and a powerful forty-foot motor-launch came into view. She was about a hundred and fifty yards away, and making a lot of racket. But Gardner, yelling wildly and flapping his shirt in the air, succeeded in catching her attention. She turned in toward the rock; but in the next instant the noise of the motor stopped, and she swerved off again. The pilot had caught sight of Gardner's gaoler.

There were three men in the launch. One of them hailed the prisoner.

"What's up?" he demanded concisely.

"I shot that brute's calf yesterday," answered Gardner, "and she smashed up my boat and chased me up here on to this rock."

There was silence for a moment on the launch. Then the captain answered—

"Any fellow that's looking for trouble can generally find it by starting in to fool with a 'killer,'" said he.

"I've thought since that I had made a mistake," said Gardner drily. "But that was yesterday morning, and I'm pretty near all in. Come and take me off."

There was a brief consultation on the launch. The orca, meanwhile, continued her patrol before the rock, as if such things as forty-foot motor-boats were not worth noticing.

"You'll have to hang on a bit longer," shouted the captain, "while we run back to port and get a whale-gun. We've got a heavy rifle here, but it's not safe to tackle her with that, for, if we didn't fix her first shot, she'd make matchwood of this launch in about ten seconds. We'll be back inside of an hour, so don't fret."

"Thanks!" said Gardner; and, sweeping off in a wide curve, the launch disappeared behind the island.

It seemed to the imprisoned man a terribly long hour, and he had occasion to bless the cool dripping jacket before he again heard the *chug—chug—chug—chug* of the motor clamouring behind his prison. This time, as soon as it came in sight, it bore straight down upon the orca. In its bow, as it slid gracefully dipping over the smooth swell, Gardner remarked a strange gun—a sort of short big-bore rifle on a swivel. The orca now took note of the fact that the launch was heading straight for her. She paused in her tireless patrolling, and eyed it defiantly, hesitating as to whether she should attack it or not.

The launch reversed propellers till her progress came to a stop, while her captain sighted the weapon in her bow. There was a mighty report. The monster flung herself half-way out of the water, and fell back with a gigantic splash. For a moment she rushed madly around in a half circle, then crashed headlong into the cliff, gave one violent shudder, and slowly sank to a fringing reef about two fathoms down.

"Have you plenty of water right up to your ledge?" demanded the captain, as the launch drew slowly in.

"Plenty," said Gardner, swinging down stiffly from his niche and standing ready to crawl aboard.

TRIOLET.

SUNSHINE and Snow!
It's the way of the Spring
And a maiden, I know.
Sunshine and Snow!
Hot or cold will it blow?
What *will* to-day bring—
Sunshine or Snow?
It's the way of the Spring!

MARY BELL.

BILLY IN SEARCH OF ADVENTURES.

BY MARGARET WESTRUP.

BILLY stood in the library window and looked out with gloomy eyes upon the wet autumn garden. No one in the whole world cared about him, and he didn't care for anyone. Not he! He rubbed his nose, in boredom, up and down the library window, endeavouring to produce a squeak, and when none resulted, he anathematised pessimistically the lack of bone in the bridge of his nose. Of course it would not squeak! Of course he had no bone in his nose! He wondered that he had any nose at all. What was the use of a nose that wouldn't squeak, anyway? He supposed Anthony Seldon's nose would squeak beautifully against a window-pane, and Aunt Primrose would like it ever so. Well, he didn't care. Not he! And Aunt Primrose needn't think *he* minded being locked in that dark little library room, with the funny smell and the ugly old books all round the walls. It was rather fun, really. Anthony Seldon wouldn't mind being locked in there, and the house all quiet, and no one cared about you. Well, he didn't mind, either. Not he! It was rather fun. And you weren't going to say you were sorry for trying to swim in the duck-pond and getting yourself all muddy. Aunt Primrose didn't care a bit, really, if you were sorry or not. She never cared these days.

Suppose they never remembered you were there—locked up in that dark little library room, with the funny smell and the ugly old books all round the walls—and you just stayed there till you starved to death, and got thinner and thinner. And you'd hear Aunt Primrose and Aunt Aggythar and the others moving about the house, but you'd never make a sound, of course; you'd be too proud to ask for even a bit of crust or a cup of water. Would Aunt Primrose care then, when they broke open the door and burst into the room, and found a dead corpse lying on the floor?

Billy's face lit with enthusiasm. He stuck his hands deep into his pockets and eyed the floor thoughtfully. Where should the dead corpse lie?

Through the keyhole a voice spoke softly.

"Billikins!" it said.

Billy waited, eyeing the door eagerly.

"Billy, are you sorry?"

Billy's lips opened to answer.

Another voice—Anthony Seldon's voice—said something in low tones. Billy could not distinguish the words, but he heard Aunt Primrose's answer—

"Of course he is sorry really, poor mite!"

Billy flung out a defiant shout: "I'm not! I just *like* it in here!"

"Oh, Billy!"

"I do! I do!"

"Aren't you just a little bit sorry, Billy?"

The tones were grieved and very soft. Billy swallowed and hesitated.

Anthony Seldon said impatiently: "Come, Primrose, leave the little beggar till he *is* sorry!"

Billy called out—

"I *like* it in here!"

Miss Primrose said sadly—

"Very well—I shall go away now, Billy."

"I—I *like* it in here!"

"I shall come back in five minutes, Billy. Perhaps you will be sorry by then."

She was gone, and Anthony Seldon was gone with her; he was always with her these days.

Billy, whistling loudly, went over to the window and counted the dead dahlias in the big round bed. There were fourteen quite dead and six just going brown. He counted them over and over again. Then he went all round the room and counted the red books, the brown, and the green, then the ones with gold on them, and then he *knew* that it was hours and hours and hours since Aunt Primrose had come, and she had said she was coming back in five minutes. What was the use of dying and being a dead corpse if Aunt Primrose was never coming back? And, anyway, she wouldn't care; she'd just smile—she was always smiling these days.

When Miss Agatha unlocked the door and entered, she found a limp Billy listlessly rubbing his nose on the window-pane. She said—

"Billy, you were very naughty."

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Billy listened because he was so bored, but he had heard it several times already, and he sighed rather wearily.

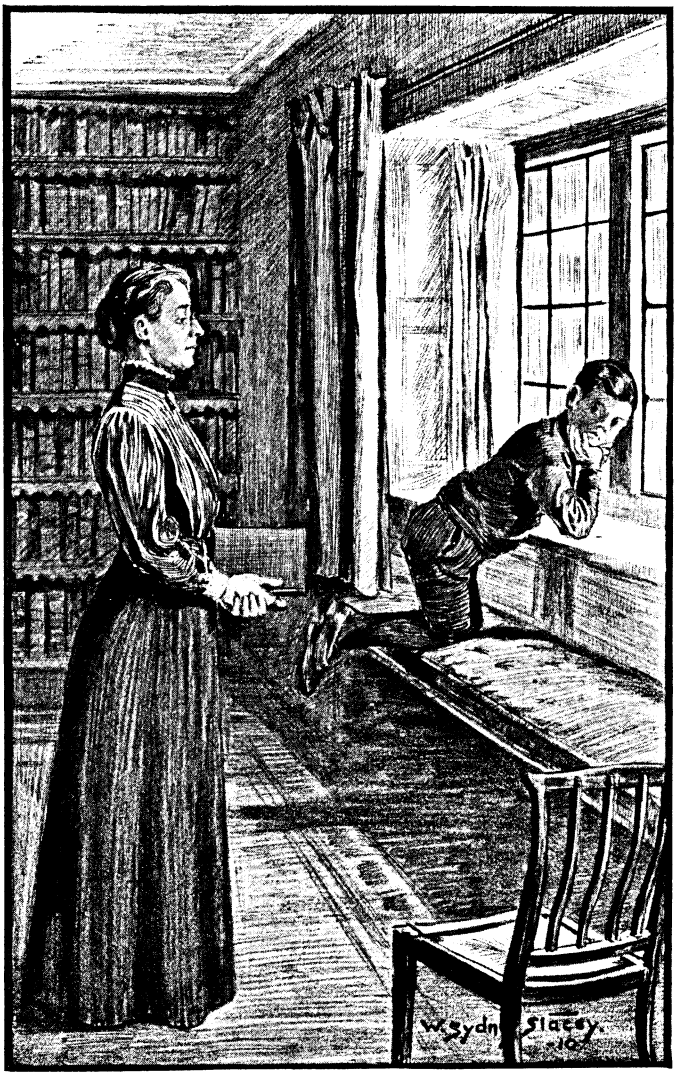
"Will you promise never to try to swim in the duck-pond again, Billy?"

The duck-pond, the ducks, the very mud, had grown abhorrent to Billy. At that moment Billy cared for nothing and nobody in all the world.

"Yes, Aunt Aggythar," he said in an uninterested voice.

"Very well, then, you may run and play in the garden for a while."

Billy walked out into the garden; he wandered round the wet paths till he found a stone to kick along. He kicked it with much force, and when Miss Agatha, looking from a window, called to him to be careful, or he would wear out his boots, he searched eagerly in the hope of protruding toes. But he found none, and his face grew overcast again.



"Billy listened because he was so bored."

"Billy, why do you not play with your ball?" said Miss Agatha from the window.

"Don't want to, thank you, Aunt Aggythar."

"And don't you want to play with your hoop?"

"No, Aunt Aggythar."

"Well, then, your *foot*ball?"

"No, Aunt Aggythar."

"Run, then, Billy! You will catch cold dawdling about like that."

Billy broke into a slow jog-trot. He trotted crossly twice round the dahlia bed, then fell into a walk again.

"Billy, dawdling about still! Run and play!"

Billy, with a sudden angry spurt of energy, tore round the dahlia bed and into the sedate figure of Leslie entering by the little green garden gate.

Leslie was in a very bad temper that morning, because she had done various things she ought not to have done, and had been punished accordingly. So she greeted Billy with a disapproving: "You are very rough, Billy." And she added: "I have been sent to play with you." After which they quarrelled, and one of the intermediate aunts of Billy, coming into the garden through the green gate, found them facing each other on the gravel path, very quiet and exceedingly dignified.

She said amiably—

"That is right. You won't be so lonely

now that you have Leslie to play with, poor little Billy."

From the window Miss Agatha called to know if the aunt had met Miss Primrose, and was told that Miss Primrose was at the rectory, and would stay to tea.

She laid her hand on Billy's shoulder.

"Poor little boy, how you do miss your naughty Aunt Primrose!"

Billy jerked away his shoulder.

"But you mustn't be jealous of Anthony, you know," she said, shaking a forefinger at him, and so she passed on up the path to the house.

Billy said nothing for a while. He dug his hands deep into his pockets, and his eyes, above very red cheeks, glared defiance at Leslie.

Leslie threw a dead dahlia at him.

Billy said slowly—

"I'm goin' to run away!"

II.

RIGHT away and away in the great big forests, amongst trees as large as houses, where the footprints of man had never trodden, and you had to keep your eyes and ears open in case of savages or wild animals rushing upon you from behind, you felt a great big man, and you didn't care a bit about Aunt Primrose or that silly little dark library room, with the funny smell and the ugly old books all round the walls. Not you! And you didn't care what a silly old aunt said about being jealous. *You* knew that you had just run away because, when a boy's getting pretty big—*'most* a man—he gets rather sick of never having any adventures and just living with only ladies; he's just *got* to have adventures some way. Oh, it was jolly to be a great big man in search of adventures! And you had to take care of Leslie a lot because, of course, she was only a girl. So you had to tell her you'd look after her all right if savages and wild animals rushed out on you; and it was fine explaining to her how, once upon a time, a certain tribe of savages in Timbuctoo quarrelled—you *thought* it was about a beautiful dusky queen, or maybe it was because they all wanted to blow the great big hunting horn at once—and so they parted, and half the tribe travelled about till they came to this *'normous* forest, and there they settled down. And they didn't like white folk coming about their land at all, and you had to guard your food awful careful, or they'd send one of their great big bloodhounds to steal it. Very often they'd send them in the middle of the night, and you wouldn't hear anything, but you'd see two little red lights coming nearer and nearer, and that'd be their eyes glaring at you——

"Oh, B-billy, sh-shan't we eat our food now, to make sure it can't be stolen?"

Well, of course, you had to eat to keep up your strength—you needed to be pretty strong to fight one of those savages, or one of their great big bloodhounds. It was a *huge* tribe—not one of the men was smaller than six feet ten inches—and *all* the bloodhounds were *quite* as big as a lion; one or two were 'most as big as elephants.

And when you'd eaten your food, you'd better wash your linen in the river and let it dry in the sun. They always did that, because a gentleman, however he was roughing it, always wore clean linen.

But the sun went behind a black cloud and came out no more, and the cloud sent down a heavy downpour of rain that splashed angrily on to the petticoat and shirt and stockings laid out to dry on the ground. And Billy and Leslie sat beneath a tree that, as Leslie said, "leaked," and tried valiantly to check the shivers that shook them from head to foot.

"It's gr-reat fun," Billy said, hugging his wet chest up tighter.

"Lovely," Leslie agreed. "Where shall we sl-sleep, Billy?"

"Oh, anywhere—just under a tree, you know."

"If—if we could find one that didn't leak, it would be nicer, wouldn't it?"

Billy opined that if you were going to mind little things like that, you'd better go right back home at once, and sleep in a horrid room with horrid blankets and pillows and things. And Leslie retorted that she *loved* sleeping on the wet ground, with the rain dripping on her. And Billy wanted to know then why she had said it would be nicer if they could find a tree that didn't leak; and Leslie replied that, anyway, she was a whole year and four months older than he was; and Billy, unable to refute an unwelcome truth, did not reply. So they sat, not quite so close as they had been, and were silent. And slowly, stealthily, a mist came creeping towards them; it twined and twisted amongst the tree trunks, it crept close and touched their cheeks, their hands, coldly, clammily; it was colder than the rain, and softer.

Leslie, sidling along to Billy, whispered—

"Savages and wild animals could cr-creep up *quite* close in the mist without us s-seeing, couldn't they, Billy?"

"Rather! Isn't it *fun?*" Billy cried, and his voice sounded startlingly loud in that misty, wet silence. He did not speak any more. It was Leslie who after a while broke the stillness. Clinging close, shivering, she whispered—

"Billy, do you think it—was in a mist like this—that the Serpent—got quite close to poor Eve in the Garden of Eden?"

"They never just *run!* We'll search eagerly for food to keep us from dying of famished hunger."

They found a few blackberries, which were at first birds' eggs, and cocoa-nuts, and pineapples, but that dwindled to mere blackberries at last, and very sour berries, too. They kept very close while they picked them, and it was when for a minute in the



"Leslie flung herself on Billy."

"P'raps," Billy curtly responded.

Presently Leslie said—

"I—I think I'll put on my petticoat and stockings now."

"They'll dry quicker that way," Billy agreed, in business-like tones.

Shaking till their teeth chattered, they helped each other into various cold and sodden garments.

"Doesn't it feel *awful* real?" cried Billy, smiting his chest with a manful air.

"P'raps, if we run about, we'll dry," Leslie suggested mournfully.

Billy chid her.

dark they were separated that Billy, on meeting again, observed—

"Wouldn't it be *fun* to run against a wild savage?"

Leslie screamed and clutched his arm. Billy went on very loudly—

"We easily might in the dark!"

He then allowed himself to be persuaded to give up the search for food, and hopefully suggested that they should light a fire. With Leslie clinging tightly to his coat, he collected some wet pine cones and bracken, and strove to secure a light by much rubbing of his penknife against a twig. Leslie stood

by, prognosticating drearily the inevitable result, which Billy doggedly refused to accept till Leslie began to weep. Then he suggested that it was bed-time.

"Wh-what are we going to have for supper?" Leslie asked.

"Oh, we can't have any supper to-night; we just pull our belts in tighter."

"I haven't got a belt."

"Oh, shut up!" Billy was intensely irritated.

Leslie wept more bitterly than before. Billy said—

"I wish I hadn't brought you with me."

"I wish you hadn't, too," wept Leslie. Huddled beneath another leaky tree, Billy stared, wide-eyed, out into the darkness, and wondered what it would be like to be there without Leslie—all alone.

Of course it would be great fun—oh, awful great fun! Of course it was great fun now, only you couldn't help feeling rather bad when Leslie just kept on crying and saying she was a wicked sinner to run away from a good home. That was the worst of girls. It was a pity you'd brought her, really: it'd be more fun all alone just there in the dark, with the rain making awful funny noises all round you, and you just watching out for two red lights that'd come creeping along—closer and closer——

"What are you pinching me for, Billy?"

"I wasn't!"

It was funny how much wetter and colder you were than you ever were in your cold bath in the morning. It was the very wettest and coldest rain you'd ever felt, and you oughtn't to shiver and shake like that, just as if you were a silly little namby and not a big boy—'*most* a man—in search of adventures. But it was only because it was pretty dull sitting there waiting and watching for wild animals to come along, when you knew that Leslie wouldn't help you fight them, but just sat there crying and saying she'd broken her mother's heart, and she was a wicked sinner. . . . It made you feel all funny and queer inside, and Leslie said you'd both die of rheumatic fever, which wasn't nice at all, because, of course, if you'd got to die, you'd sooner die fighting a savage or a wild animal.

"Billy! Oh, *Billy*, they've come! They'll *kill* us! Oh, it's a wolf—a lion—tiger——"

Leslie, incoherent, screaming, flung herself on Billy, and the next minute they found themselves fleeing from the shadowy thing that had moved so stealthily amongst the bracken.

A red and shamed Billy stood panting and staring back into the darkness from which they had fled. His fists clenched tighter; he said breathlessly—

"Why did you drag me away?"

"Oh, we're going to be killed alive! Oh, Billy, I want to go home!" Leslie was shuddering with terror.

"I'm going back to fight it," Billy said.

Leslie screamed and clung to him. Through the darkness, startlingly near, echoed a gruesome but beautifully familiar sound.

"It's a donkey!" Billy said in a queer little voice.

"Oh!"

Back through the wet leaves, back to a wet but warm and friendly donkey.

"I *love* him! Oh, I *love* him!" wept Leslie, her arms round his neck.

"Jolly little chap," Billy said, and for the first time his voice shook.

When the donkey moved away, they moved too—they clung to that donkey. When suddenly he trotted off and left them alone, the blankness of utter cold despair seized upon them.

You didn't mind being carried home by Mr. Seldon, because, of course, you were much too weak to walk—you were nearly dying of starvation, and your voice kept going all funny, and that was because you were 'most 'lirious with the awful cold and wet and privations you'd gone through. Mr. Seldon was awful jolly. He understood all about it; he understood how it was that your face *wouldn't* keep dry, though it wasn't raining now; he said it was the weakness of hunger, and you'd have to have hot stuff in bed. . . . It was a pity to have to go back to a *bed*, but Mr. Seldon said it wasn't playing the game to make your aunts so frightened and anxious. . . . You hadn't thought of that. And he said he wanted you to take care of Aunt Primrose, because his work took him away from her such a lot, and there were always things to do for ladies.

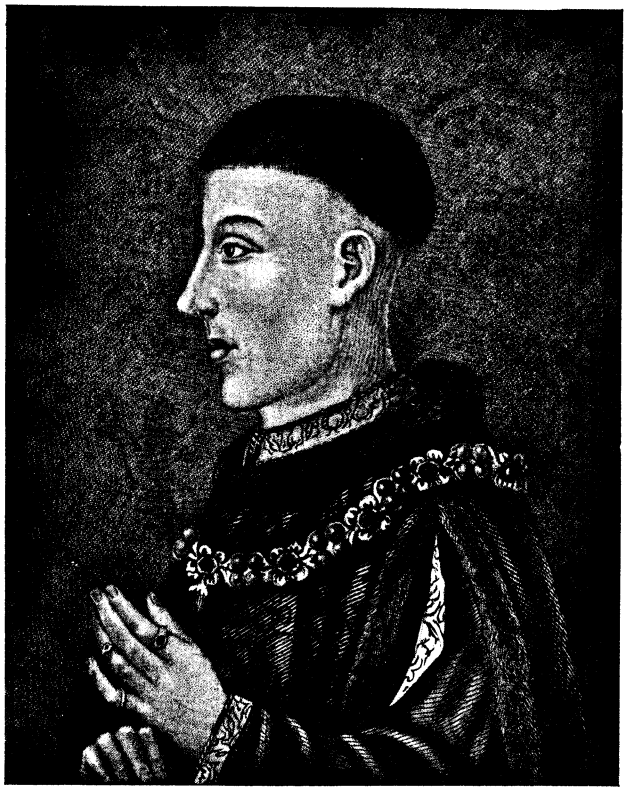
Billy said magnanimously: "*I'll* look after her! I'll give up adventures for poor Aunt Primrose!"

ENGLAND'S STORY IN PORTRAIT AND PICTURE.

XVI. THE REIGN OF HENRY V.

HENRY V., who succeeded his father, Henry IV., on the throne of England without opposition—the hereditary claim of the Earl of March, which had been made a party-cry against Henry IV., being passed over unmentioned—was born at Monmouth in 1387, and was, therefore, a boy of eleven when his father's banishment by Richard II. began the series of events which hastened that monarch's downfall. The boy's grandfather, John of Gaunt, died five months later, and Richard, as we saw in our article on his reign, seized on his great estates, in the absence of his banished son, Henry Bolingbroke, Earl of Hereford, afterwards Henry IV., but made provision for his youthful grandson, Henry of Monmouth, whom he knighted in the course of the Irish expedition of 1399. That expedition cost Richard dear by entailing his absence from England when the aggrieved Hereford landed at Ravenspur to claim, first, his father's estates, and, subsequently, the very crown itself. When Richard hastily returned to England to meet the invader, the young Henry was left in Ireland, but was brought over in time for his usurping father's coronation. These facts, which are recalled, with other details, in Mr. C. L. Kingsford's excellent volume on Henry V., in the "Heroes of the Nations" series, are especially interesting to Shakespeare's readers, as preceding the picture of the somewhat older youth presented by the poet in his splendid two-part play "Henry IV.," and amplifying the references to Richard's downfall which he makes Henry IV. reproachfully address to his son. They also add interest to that son's later protest, after his accession to the throne, when begging Heaven for grace and success before the battle of Agincourt—

> Not to-day, O Lord,
> O, not to-day, think not upon the fault
> My father made in compassing the crown!
> I Richard's body have interrèd new;
> And on it have bestowed more contrite tears
> Than from it issued forcèd drops of blood.



HENRY V., KING OF ENGLAND 1413-1422.
From the original oil painting in Kensington Palace.

Soon after his father's coronation, the young Henry was formally proclaimed Prince of Wales, and recognised by Parliament as heir-apparent to the crown; and when the rebellion in Wales, under Owen Glendower, broke out, the prince was sent as figure-head of the king's punitive expedition, with that experienced soldier, Henry Percy, better known as "Hotspur," as his general. For the next seven years, 1401–1408, the young prince was his father's lieutenant in the almost continuous Welsh campaigns, growing rapidly in authority and soldiership as he



HENRY V.

From an illumination to a French version of "The Golden Book" of Cardinal Bonaventura, now in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

advanced in years; and comparatively early in that period he played a spirited part in his father's defeat of Hotspur and Glendower at the battle of Shrewsbury. From the end of the Welsh disturbances, in 1408, to the time of his father's death, in 1413, Prince Henry took an increasingly active and responsible part in State affairs, as we saw in our preceding article, his father being broken in health. How far his already satisfactory military record is to be coupled with the career of reckless riot and dissipation ascribed to him by tradition is by no means clear. His first biographer, Elmham, gives credence to rumours of the kind, and the tradition seems to have been enhanced by the very vividness of its contrast with the austerity of Henry's life from the date of his accession onwards—a contrast which led Shakespeare to make the most of the "madcap" prince's earlier exuberance. But, as Mr. Keary has pointed out, Henry's earlier boyhood is too well accounted for, as passed in the Welsh campaigns, for the stories of his dissipated career in the metropolis to belong to it—certainly not at any date preceding the battle of Shrewsbury, as Shakespeare represents. More probably any such phase of disorder may have belonged to the period of Henry's withdrawal from State affairs after his sudden dismissal from the Council in a momentary reassertion of authority by the invalided Henry IV. in 1411, which included the appointment of his younger brother, the Duke of Clarence, as head of the Council, in his stead. With his absence from Court and Council may have developed his less worthy reputation, but of this period of his life—for the first time since childhood unoccupied with either military or political duties—we have but few recorded facts with which either to corroborate or to refute the traditional stories of his wild conduct.

It is true that Henry's immediate biographers and the historians of his reign, Elmham, Walsingham, and the compilers of that period in the English Chronicles, all refer to the reckless wildness and dissipation of his youth, but all of them do so in order "to point the moral and adorn the tale" of his swift conversion, not only to dignity and austerity, but to strenuous devotion to ecclesiastical interests.

It is therefore quite possible, as Mr. Kingsford suggests, that just as Falstaff, his



HENRY V.

From an engraving by G. Vertue, based on the older oil painting at Kensington Palace.



"HENRY V., ON HIS WAY FROM HIS CORONATION, REPUDIATING FALSTAFF AND THE OTHER RIOTOUS ASSOCIATES OF HIS YOUTH." BY EDUARD GRÜTZNER.

From a picture illustrating Scene V., Act V., of Shakespeare's "Henry IV., Part II.," reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.

boon companion in disorder, was originally called Oldcastle, not only by Shakespeare, but in a much earlier play representing Henry's reign, and was thus partly, at least, identified with the prince's Lollard friend, the Sir John Oldcastle who was burnt at the stake for heresy, so the ignominious side of Henry's youthful career may have been exaggerated deliberately by his political opponents, who were the very faction which consigned Oldcastle to the flames.

Whatever the exact proportion of truth in the traditional story of Henry's swift conversion "into another man," as Walsingham puts it, there is no doubt that he felt the responsibilities of kingship to be so serious that, whether he had many dissolute associates to dismiss or not, he certainly surrounded

himself, from the hour of his accession to the throne, with men of learning and experience in statesmanship, among them even those who had previously been ranged against him in authority at Court. He also showed himself secure in his succession to the crown by releasing from his long imprisonment the Earl of March, and he restored to the family estates the son of "Hotspur" Percy, and endowing masses, for the repose of Richard's soul, to be celebrated in perpetuity. Special interest attaches to this act, because, more than anything else, it goes to disprove the rumours of Richard's survival in exile which frequently disturbed the reign of Henry IV. Had the body exhibited and buried by Henry as that of the deposed king not really been his, Henry's son must have known something



"HENRY V. APPOINTING HIS MINISTERS." BY EDUARD GRÜTZNER.

"There is my hand; you shall be as a father to my youth."

From a picture illustrating Scene II., Act V., of Shakespeare's "Henry IV., Part II.," reproduced by permission of Messrs. Cassell & Co.

grandson of his father's troublesome subject, the Earl of Northumberland.

Another act of atonement for wrongs inflicted by his father's progress to the throne was shown in his removal of the remains of Richard II. from their private burial-place at Langley to a more fitting shrine in Westminster Abbey, he himself taking part in the funeral procession as chief mourner, and of Richard's continued existence, and he was under no necessity to commit this act of exhumation and solemn re-interment, which, in that case, would have been one of hypocrisy and sacrilege not only far removed from the fifth Henry's character, but entirely unnecessary.

Religious questions more urgent than the funeral rites of his two predecessors on the



'BEFORE AGINCOURT." BY SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A.

throne now claimed the new king's attention. Whatever Henry's youthful friendship with Oldcastle and other Lollards may have amounted to, arising, perhaps, in part, out of his association in boyhood with Richard II. and the inheriting of his own grandfather's, John of Gaunt's, sympathies with the reformers, he had probably, after taking his place in the Council, partaken of the general alarm excited among the higher classes by the levelling principles of the Lollards. For while still only Prince of Wales, he had supported Parliament in presenting a petition to his father for the arrest and punishment of their preachers. Now, however, the leaders of the sect sought to intimidate their persecutors, and in the course of the new king's first Parliament, papers were affixed to the doors of churches in London, stating that, if force were employed to suppress the new doctrines, a hundred thousand men would be found ready to draw the sword in their defence. Presently the responsibility for these papers was traced to Cowling, the residence of Sir John Oldcastle, who, having married the heiress of the last Lord Cobham, had been summoned to the House of Lords in right of his wife.



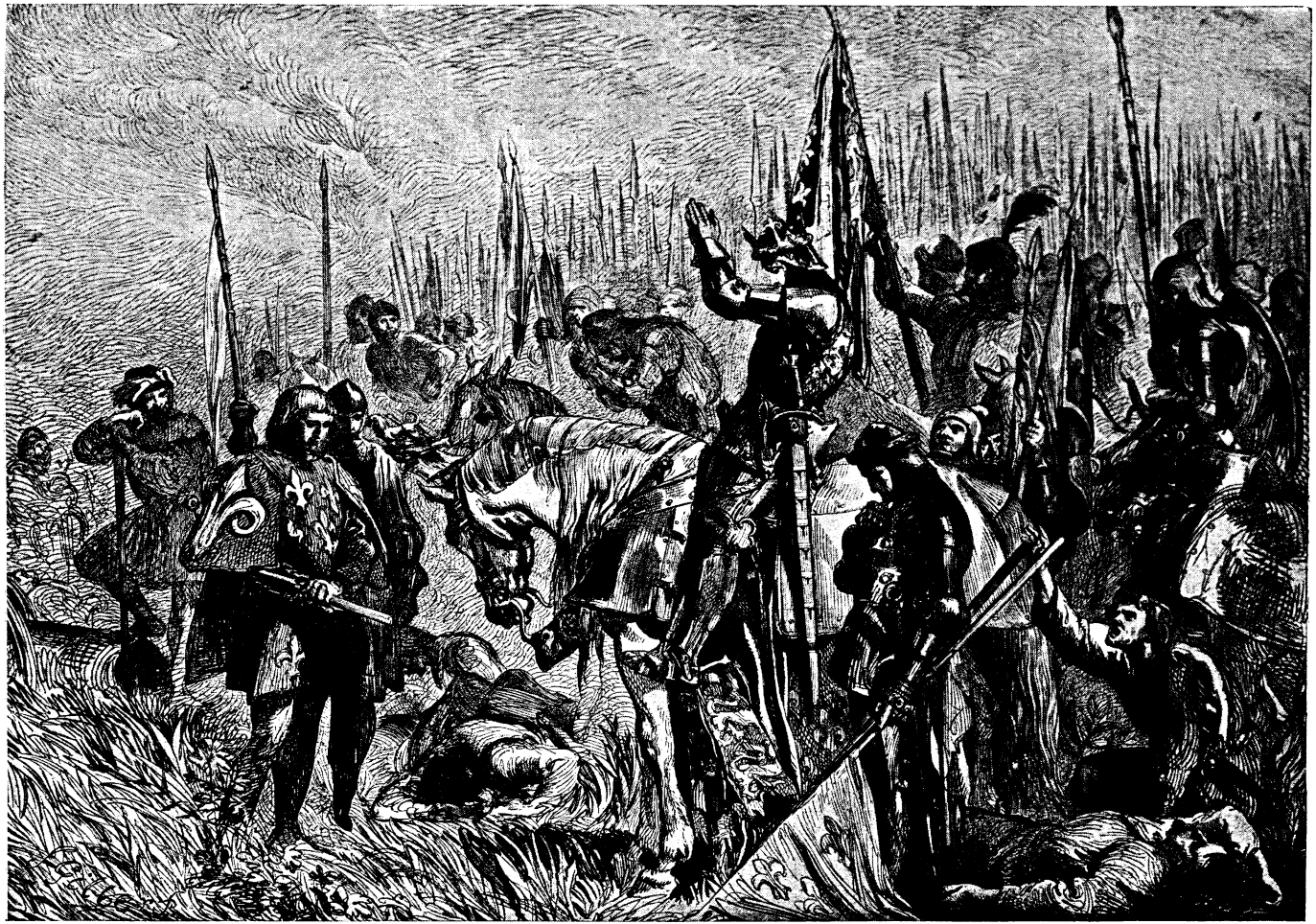
"HENRY V. AND WESTMORELAND." BY H. C. SELOUS.

HENRY: For he, to-day, that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother!

From a picture illustrating Scene III., Act IV., of Shakespeare's "Henry V.," reproduced by permission of Messrs. Cassell & Co.

The convocation, as Lingard puts it, to spare the honour of a man so intimate with the sovereign, instead of summoning him before them, denounced him to the king as the supporter of false doctrine. Henry undertook to convert his friend with all the zeal of an apostle; but the disciple ventured to contradict his master, and suddenly withdrew from Windsor. His departure was followed by a proclamation ordering the magistrates to apprehend all itinerant preachers, and by a direction to the archbishop to proceed against Oldcastle according to law. After further controversy, Oldcastle was committed to the Tower, but managed to escape. His Lollard partisans gathered from all parts of the country for an advance on London, and after a tumult, in which some seventy of them were made prisoners, nearly forty were condemned and put to death. Oldcastle himself escaped into Wales.

Despite the persecution of the Lollards which his position required, however, it is probable that Henry was not entirely averse from at least that clause in their proposed reforms which aimed at confiscating some proportion of the vast revenues of the



"THE VICTOR OF AGINCOURT." BY SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A.
"Non nobis, Domine!"

Church, and in this he had the support of many lay peers who were not of Lollard tendency in any matters of doctrine; and in 1414 no fewer than a hundred and ten alien priories were suppressed and their wealth diverted to the Crown.

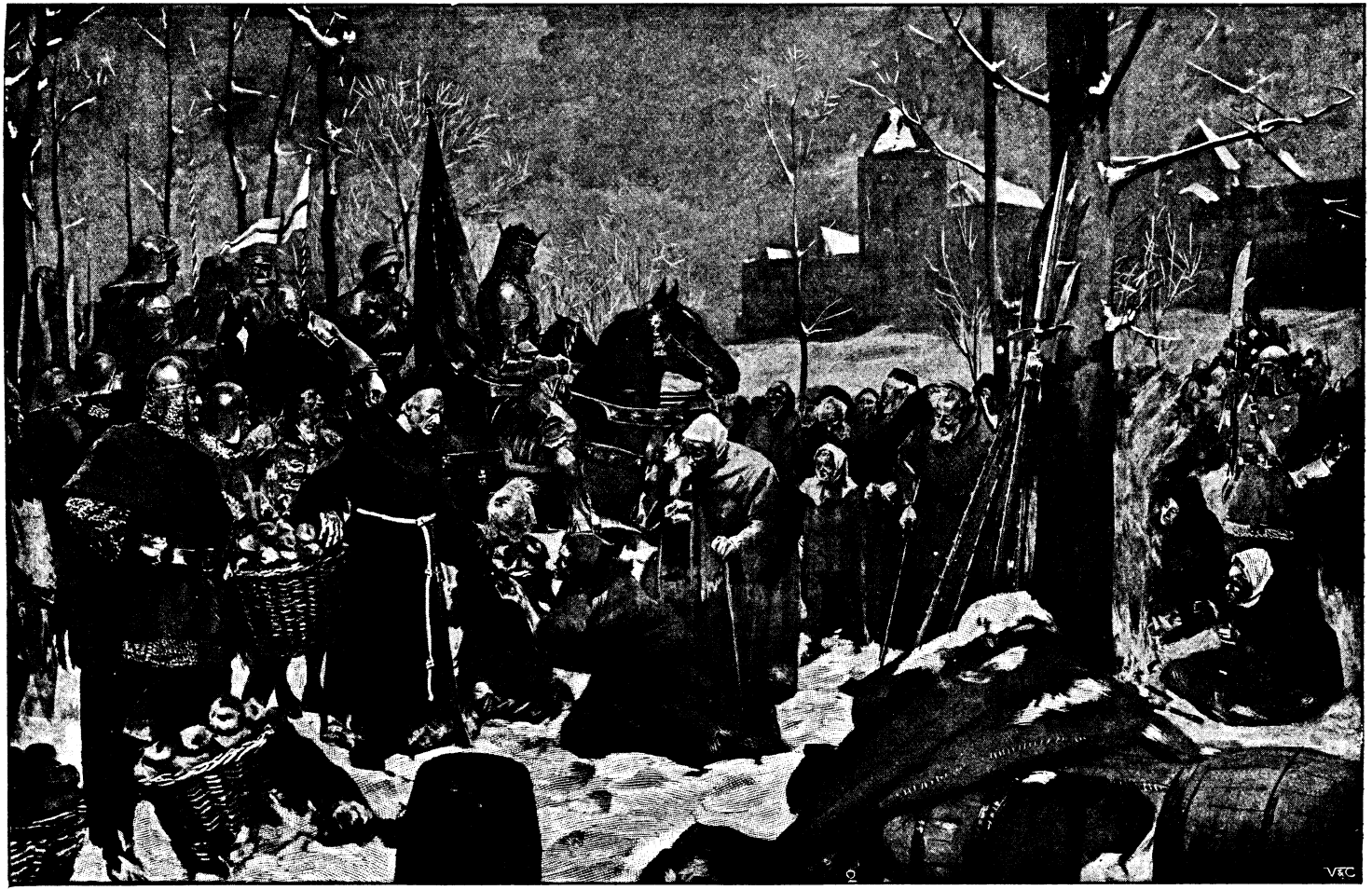
It is probable, therefore, that the Church found it very much to her interest, at this moment, to support the king's ambition for foreign conquest, although there is no actual record to verify the tradition that the Archbishop of Canterbury first inspired it. Whether it was so or not, Henry now repudiated the Salic law, which forbade a woman to inherit the throne of France, and claimed a prior right of succession through his descent from Isabella, daughter of Philip IV. of France, and mother of Henry's great-grandfather, Edward III., the reigning king, Charles VI., having inherited the crown only through a younger branch of Philip's descendants. The intermittent insanity of King Charles, and the party strife which convulsed France, made this the psychological moment for reassertion of English claims to ascendancy in French domains; and though the English King consented to a succession of short truces at the request of King Charles, he did so only that he might have opportunity to mature his plans, to provide money for his expenses, and to open the war with a sufficient army. A little more than a year had elapsed from his accession when he unexpectedly demanded the crown of France, with all its fiefs.



KATHARINE OF VALOIS, QUEEN TO HENRY V

Drawn by S. Harding from an illumination in a manuscript prayer-book.

In the course of the years 1413–1415, several embassies went to and fro between the two Courts of England and France, and though each set of suggestions contained some conditions that one or other monarch could not accept, a further truce was each time either made or implied, pending further discussion. By February, 1415, however, having never ceased to prepare for the war which his subjects wanted, Henry offered peace and alliance on condition of his own marriage with the French King's daughter, Katharine of Valois, her dowry to be two million crowns, the payment of one million six hundred thousand crowns as arrears of the ransom of King John of France, agreed upon after the battle of Poictiers, and the cession of large tracts of territory previously owned by England, but lost in the course of her former French wars. When France agreed to but part of this proposal, and rejected the rest, Henry pushed forward his preparations for war, appointed his brother to be regent of the kingdom in his own absence, and assembled a great army at Southampton. There, on the eve of embarking for France, he unexpectedly learned of danger nearer home, in the form of a conspiracy to displace the House of Lancaster in favour of the more direct hereditary succession of the Earl of March. The Earl of Cambridge, second son of the late Duke of York, had married the sister of the Earl of March, and, in support of his cause, now conspired with Lord Scrope of Masham and Sir Thomas Grey of Heton. All three conspirators were at once tried, condemned, and executed, but the Earl of March himself was pardoned. He was probably either guiltless of encouraging the plot, or else earned the king's clemency by repenting of any part in it and revealing it to the king. Having thus summarily dealt with domestic danger, Henry put to sea with an army of some thirty thousand men, which included six thousand cavalry, and, hoping to be further reinforced by the banished Duke of Burgundy and his Flemish subjects, landed near Harfleur on August 13, 1415. For over five weeks Harfleur resisted his siege, and, when it surrendered, the English army had already sustained losses so considerable that some of Henry's chief nobles urged a return to



"HENRY V. GIVING FOOD ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1418, TO THE STARVING PEOPLE EJECTED FROM ROUEN WHILE THAT CITY STILL HELD OUT AGAINST HIS SIEGE." By Allan Stewart.

England; but to this the king would not agree. He offered, however, to restore Harfleur to the enemy in return for an unmolested passage to Calais, but this being refused, he was compelled to set forth through Normandy, knowing that two great forces, one under the French King and the Dauphin, and the other commanded by the Constable of France, were taking the field against him. By the time they came in sight of the foe, the English army had suffered greatly from sickness and lack of provisions, from which they had been constantly cut off by flying detachments of the enemy; and when, on October 24, they found the whole French army drawn up on the plain of Agincourt in such a position that an engagement could no longer be avoided, Henry's army was but half the size of that which had landed at Harfleur, and the enemy outnumbered it more than sixfold. Therefore the results of the battle which ensued form the most wonderful instance in the history of warfare of the victory of a force over one so enormously superior in strength.

The rival armies were encamped so near that the noise of each could be plainly heard in the other's lines. The English, though tired and exhausted "with rainy marching in the painful field," were undismayed, but serious. Shakespeare has taken recorded facts and clothed them with words which give a spiritual beauty to the scene of night-long preparation for the fight against overwhelming odds. The French, after lighting great fires to warm themselves and dry their garments, talked in their bivouacs of the prisoners they should take next day, and the ransoms they should gain. And this different mood has also been vividly suggested by the poet.



"KATHARINE OF FRANCE PRESENTED TO HENRY V. BY THE QUEEN, HER MOTHER, AND THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY, AT THE TREATY OF TROYES, 1419." BY T. STOTHARD.

Henry marshalled his troops at daybreak with remarkable judgment and skill. He divided them into three bodies, with the archers in advance, and each archer was provided with a stout stake, sharpened at both ends and iron shod, which, fixed obliquely in the ground before him, formed an admirable defence. The king rode along the various divisions, encouraging them with words of hope and bravery. So, with cheerful alacrity, each man prepared to do his best, all full of trust in their gallant leader.



"THE MARRIAGE OF HENRY V. AND KATHARINE OF VALOIS."

FROM THE PICTURE BY WILLIAM KENT IN THE COLLECTION AT HAMPTON COURT PALACE.

In the French host, on the other hand, there was no definite plan of action. They were all under the command of the Constable, but the insubordinate young lords would not obey his commands.

Towards noon the order was given for the banners to advance, and the English moved bravely forward. The archers, when they had come within proper distance, fixed their stakes in front of them, and the French horsemen pressed onward, but were met with a rain of arrows which staggered them, while on their flank the ambushed archers poured in their shafts. Their army had been arrayed in files thirty deep, and they were all mingled together. The English files were but four deep, and had room to move readily. The first division, falling back, became helplessly entangled in some ploughed cornfields; whereupon the English archers, rushing forth with loud shouts from behind their stakes, made a massacre among the steel-clad French with their hatchets and billhooks. The bowmen having done their part, King Henry advanced, at the head of the men-at-arms, against the second division of the French, led by the Duke of Alençon. The Duke made a bold dash at the standard of England, and cut off a part of the crown that encircled the English King's helmet, but was himself slain the next moment, and with his death the battle was virtually decided. The third division of the French, which had not yet been engaged, lost heart, though it was more than double the number of the whole English army, and began to fly from the field.



KATHARINE OF VALOIS, QUEEN TO HENRY V.
From a drawing by A. Bouvier.

The slaughter of the French was enormous. Among those left dead on the field were a hundred and twenty great lords, and eight thousand knights and other gentlemen. Many prisoners of high rank were held for ransom, among them the Dukes of Orleans and Bourbon. The English losses, on the other hand, were not much above sixteen hundred.

After so signal a victory, it might be thought the ancient vision of English supremacy in France was within measurable distance of becoming actual fact; yet Henry could not keep his army in the field to turn one triumph into wholesale conquest. Hume makes an interesting point in the necessities of the case when he says: "The three great battles of Crecy, Poictiers, and Agincourt bear a singular resemblance to each other in their most considerable circumstances. In all of them there appears the same temerity in the English princes, who, without any object of moment, merely for the sake of plunder, had ventured so far into the enemy's country as to leave themselves no retreat, and, unless saved by the utmost imprudence in the French commanders, were, from their very situation, exposed to inevitable destruction. But allowance being made for this temerity, which, according to the regular plans of war followed in those ages, seems to have been in some measure unavoidable, there appears, in the day of action, the same presence of mind, dexterity, courage, firmness, and precaution on the part of the English; the same precipitation, confusion, and vain confidence on the part of the French; and the events were such as might have been expected from such opposite conduct. The immediate consequences, too, of these great victories were similar. Instead of pushing the French with vigour, and taking advantage of their consternation, the English princes, after their victory, seem rather to have relaxed their efforts, and to have allowed the enemy leisure to recover from his losses. Henry interrupted not his



"DICK WHITTINGTON, AS LORD MAYOR OF LONDON, GIVING A BANQUET TO HENRY V." BY D. W. WYNFIELD.

According to the traditional story, Queen Katharine remarked upon the perfume of the fire of scented wood, and Whittington declared that he made the fuel still rarer by adding bonds of the king for money lent to him by the City, which it was his privilege to redeem.

march a moment after the battle of Agincourt. He carried his prisoners to Calais, thence to England, he even concluded a truce with the enemy, and it was not till after an interval of two years that any body of English troops appeared in France.

"The poverty of all the European princes, and the small resources of their kingdoms, were the cause of these continual interruptions in their hostilities; and though the maxims of war were, in general, destructive, their military operations were mere incursions which, without any settled plan, they carried on against each other."

By the introduction of a "Chorus" after the battle of Agincourt, Shakespeare was able to "brook abridgment," and after describing the triumphal return of the victorious Henry to his own country and capital, says to his audience—

> . . . . . omit
> All the occurrences, whatever chanced,
> Till Harry's back-return again to France.

But in making his epic drama of English patriotism, he was justified in preserving more unity of theme than is available to the prose chronicler, and some brief allusion is necessary to the events of the five years' interval which elapsed between the English victory at Agincourt and the Treaty of Troyes, idealised by the dramatist in his charming scenes of preparation for the marriage of Henry and the French King's daughter, Katharine of Valois.

In the spring of 1416 there came, on a diplomatic mission, to Henry's court, Sigismund, King of the Romans and emperor-elect, who, zealous to mend the schism caused by rivalry for the papal chair, sought the support of both England and France, and therefore wished to reconcile the two countries. Ambassadors from the French King arrived in England about the same time, as did also William of Bavaria, Duke of Holland. Negotiations for a treaty with France resulted in an offer by Henry to resign his rights both of inheritance and of victory in battle on the condition that the Treaty of Bretigny should be fully carried out. France refused, and soon afterwards the Count of Armagnac, who had succeeded the dead Dauphin in acting for the mad king, blockaded Henry's hardly-won Harfleur. An English fleet, not accompanied by Henry himself, succeeded in relieving the town, and soon afterwards Henry and his two guests and the Duke of Burgundy attended a congress at Calais, which led to nothing.

Henry returned home to raise supplies from Parliament, and even pawned his crown and jewels to the Bishop of Winchester and the City of London to raise sufficient funds for a new invasion of France. He landed in Normandy with twenty-six thousand men just as a crisis in the Armagnac and Burgundian strife had concentrated all French troops around Paris; but the Normans refused to recognise him as their lawful duke, and bravely defended their territory. Fortress after fortress, however, was taken by Henry, until the French Government, to quote from Lingard, did not even attempt to oppose the king in the field, but solicited a peace or an armistice. Henry, however, would grant neither peace nor armistice but on condition that Katharine, the daughter of King Charles, should become his wife, that the regency of the kingdom should be given to him during the lifetime of the insane king, and that he should be declared his successor at his death.

To these extreme conditions the French would not agree, and Henry continued his victorious career, and, reinforced by fifteen thousand men, was enabled to divide his army and undertake several operations at the same time. Cherbourg surrendered after a resistance of six months, the whole of Lower Normandy submitted, and the king proceeded to arrange the government of his conquered territory.

France was now divided into two separate governments, more hostile to each other than to their common enemy, the King of England, and equally desirous to purchase by concessions his assistance for their own interest. Henry listened to their proposals, but only played one party off against the other, without intermitting his military reduction of Upper Normandy, the capital of which, Rouen, was taken after a stubborn resistance to Henry's siege. Thereupon both the factions which were rending France asunder reopened negotiations with the English conqueror. Thus was brought about the famous Treaty of Troyes in 1420, of which the principal conditions were that Henry should marry the Princess Katharine; that during the life of the French King, Charles, he should rule France as Regent, with the assistance of a Council; and that, on the king's death, he should succeed to the throne, to the exclusion of any member of the French royal house, Normandy being reannexed to the crown of France. The royal marriage was solemnised in June, and in the following January the victorious king brought his French queen to her coronation at Westminster Abbey.

The Treaty of Troyes had been prematurely named "The Perpetual Peace," for, within a month of Henry's return to England, his brother, the Duke of Clarence, whom he had appointed as his deputy in France, was attacked by a body of troops belonging to the Dauphin's party, with whom were joined some thousands of Scots, sent by Murdoch, Regent of Scotland. The Duke of Clarence and fifteen hundred of his English troops were killed. Henry at once returned to France with an army of thirty thousand men. Again victory attended him, until all France north of the Loire, except Anjou and Maine, submitted to him.

In 1421 Queen Katharine gave birth to a son, afterwards to be King of England as Henry VI., and in the following year she and the infant prince followed the king to France, where the two Courts of England and France were held together in Paris.

But the victorious king was not destined to wear the crown of France himself, nor even long to enjoy his successes. He was already marked down by disease, and before the year was out he was lying on his death-bed at Vincennes, appointing the Duke of Bedford to be regent in France, and the Duke of Gloucester in England, but as second to Bedford in supreme authority, on behalf of his nine-months-old son. Henry died on August 31, 1422, at the early age of thirty-four, after a reign of nine years.

After a stately ceremony in the Cathedral of Notre Dame, his body was carried to Calais, and thence escorted by a fleet of French and English ships to Dover. The procession to London was marked by solemn services at each halting-place between the seaport and the capital, and after lying in state at St. Paul's, the body of the hero was interred at Westminster Abbey.

"Thus far," as Shakespeare makes his Chorus say, have we

> ". . . . pursued the story,
> In little room confining mighty men,"

for the purposes of recalling the main facts of Henry's reign, and now have but little space in which to dwell on the character of the man whom both his immediate biographers and those who came after portrayed as the ideal type of warrior-king. Shakespeare went further, and presented him as the very pattern of all heroic qualities, the embodiment of English patriotism, the incarnation of all that was noblest in mediæval manhood and loftiest in chivalry and kingship. In all probability we are justified in accepting the portrait, after making allowances for certain defects, which were no defects in the eyes of contemporary chroniclers, and for which even modern estimate may hold the period, rather than the individual, responsible.



"HENRY V., ON HIS DEATH-BED, COMMENDING HIS INFANT SON, AFTERWARDS HENRY VI., TO THE CARE OF HIS NOBLES." *From an old engraving.*

FAIR FRANCES.

By R. MURRAY GILCHRIST,

Author of "A Peakland Faggot," "The Gentle Thespians," "The Abbey Mystery," etc.



S the post-chaise passed down the stony lane that leads to Unthank, cutting across a spur of the moor and then entering rough woodland, Mr. Selioke's humour changed, the foolish vivacity of a month-old husband giving place to an odd reserve, such as the girl who sat beside him had never seen him display even in the most tempestuous hours of courtship. At the very beginning of that byway where the arms of a tall guide-post bore the legend of "To Calton St. Anne's," "To Grassbrook," and "To Milton Dale," he had amazed her by stopping short in the midst of one of the tenderest "little language" speeches, and for at least five minutes seemed entirely oblivious of her presence.

Somewhat piqued, his wife turned her attention to the countryside. To the right, on the summit of a knoll surrounded by a belt of larches, she saw the tall figure of a woman —a goddess, for certain—the audacious head, the perfect bosom having no counterpart in human life. But as they drove onward, the undergrowth thinned and discovered something very curious. A creature so stately, even though carved in stone, should, if draped at all, have been draped in antique fashion. To Mrs. Selioke's cultivated taste—the taste of one who had been finished at a fashionable boarding-school, where a butler was kept, and where every pupil owned silver mug, fork, and spoon—it seemed remarkably incongruous that she should wear a wide distended farthingale, a stomacher, and ruffled sleeves.

She touched her husband's arm. "My dear Selioke," she said, "surely there is some strange story connected with that statue? Pray tell me; you know how I love stories. And this is your land."

His abstraction disappeared; he turned a gravely smiling face to the fresh young beauty.

"To tell you the truth, dearest," he replied, "I had quite forgotten that it was here; in fact, you had driven its very existence out of my mind. And I did not expect to see it thus. I have not been at Unthank since I was a boy—it must be ten years ago—and then she stood inside a stone building with a leaded roof and great barred windows."

She asked him to stop the postboy, so that they might leave the vehicle for a nearer view, but Mr. Selioke shook his head.

"See how the sun's setting," he said. "That black cloud means heavy rain. I doubt if we shall reach the house without a thorough drenching. And we've travelled all day along surely the worst roads in all England. No, my love, you are too tired, and, to be plain with you, I'd liefer not take you to the place except at full noontide."

"Why?" cried the wife, still looking at the strange figure. "Surely she's not a ghost?"

"No, neither a ghost nor a statue, merely an effigy," he made answer. "But I'll tell you the story some other time. Forgive me for being so silent; I am half minded to think that we were unwise in visiting this place of memories."

The post-chaise went carefully on. Suddenly the pressure of her fingers tightened. "See, Selioke," she exclaimed aghast, "the thing's gone—it's no longer there!"

He turned and laughed. "My Caroline," he said, "we've turned about—that's why it's out of sight. I dare swear, if we went back a few yards, we'd find it again."

Mrs. Selioke had grown paler. "Then let us go," she said. "I should never be content unless."

He was too fond a lover to refuse. They alighted and returned a dozen paces, to find the white figure still standing in its girdle of larches. Afterwards Mr. Selioke slipped his arm around her slender waist, and they followed the slow post-chaise in the customary attitude of early Victorian sweethearts.

"But why an effigy?" she asked. "I always understood that effigies were made to stand or lie on tombs, like those in the

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church at home. You remember them—poor painted squires and ladies, with their boys and girls all in long gowns. That's my idea of an effigy."

A few drops of rain fell. Mr. Selioke, without another word, carried her, she protesting happily, to the conveyance, and bade the man drive on as quickly as was compatible with safety. Fortunately, the full strength of the storm did not come until they had reached the shelter of the portico, where a stout and comely woman with a big goitre welcomed them with curtseys, speaking in a dialect almost incomprehensible to the young lady's ears.

"You're vastly welcome," she said—"vastly welcome to owd Unthank. I'd given up all hope of seeing my master e'er again. Sure, 'tis just ten year come Mart'mas since you went to school and ne'er came back any more. And you were thirteen then, which does make three-and-twenty now." She turned particular attention upon the wife. "I knew as you'd be lovely," she went on, "for e'er since the Seliokes were the Seliokes, they've chosen none but the best. Happen young madam'll let me show her to the best chamber, where all gentlemen and wives of the family have been used to sleep since the house was built?"

"Ay, do," said Mr. Selioke. "My wife is weary; she'd be better for a little rest before supper. And where's Hezekiah? I'd hoped to see him with you."

"My man'd have given aught to be meet you at the door," said the woman. "But two year ago he were bested with rheumatism, and since then he's been only fit to sit aside the house-place fire, winter and summer alike. He bade me offer his loving respects, and ask the favour of your going to him at your pleasure. By himself he cannot walk an inch; my son and I have to put him to bed like a babby e'ery night."

Selioke, having accompanied them to the foot of the staircase and unhasped the dog-gate, kissed his wife, watched her ascend to the first floor, then turned down a side passage—where the flags were worn hollow with the feet of many generations of serving-folk—and entered a great room, half parlour, half kitchen, near whose hearth a stout, bearded old man sat in a green cloth-covered arm-chair with large ear-screens. As the young man approached, he turned his heavy eyes, strove to stand, but sank back with a guttural moan. The cushion at the back of his head fell to the floor. Selioke replaced it, and bade him rest comfortably.

"I am sorry to see you in this condition, my good Hezekiah," he said. "Had I known, you would have gone to take the Buxton waters long ago. Before I leave Unthank I shall make every arrangement for your journey there."

"'Twould be of no use, master," said the gaffer, "and I be too old to expect cure. Dunna worry about me; I be all right so long as I can oversee all that goes off from this chair. Well, I be more glad nor words can tell to have you in your own house again, though, to be sure, the other estates are far more suited to a gentleman o' your quality. Heavens! To think how in owd times I taught you woodcraft and fishing! Eh me! I'd give all the rest o' my life for one o' those days! Dost remember climbing for the hern's nest, when the branch broke and you fell, for me to catch you in the very nick of time?"

"Ay," replied Mr. Selioke. "We'll talk at length about those things later on. I've something to ask you now. When did that building in the wood fall? I was so startled, when I caught sight of Fair Frances, that for some minutes I scarce know what I did. And then my wife, too, saw, and asked me the why and wherefore."

"'Twas four weeks ago, in a storm," said Hezekiah—"four weeks come to-morrow; and, from the date, just two hundred year since her ladyship died—leastwise, so my Phœbe says, I being, as you know, nought o' a scholar."

"Four weeks to-morrow," said Selioke. "How strange that it should have happened on my marriage day! When I was a boy. I always thought the walls would fall inward and crush the effigy——"

"And so have I e'er thought," interrupted Hezekiah; "but 'twas not so." His voice was lowered; he looked around to see that none of the wenches overheard. "There's some'at strange about it," he continued. "My son were the first to find out what had happed, and he says as for all the world it looked as if her ladyship had put out her hand to each wall and thrust it apart. Not so much as a stone had fallen upon herself, and she appeared as white as she could ha' done when she was first fashioned."

Selioke now attempted to change the subject, but the old man insisted upon a final word. "I'd ha' given orders," said he, "but seeing as she were kith to you, I thought it might perchance be a liberty——"

"Orders for what?" inquired the young master. "To build another prison house?"

"Nay, but to chain her with the stoutest chains as could be found, so as if she were minded to stir, she couldna get far from the trees."

Selioke laughed heartily. "Why, good Hezekiah," he cried, "you're as superstitious as any old wife! How could a marble woman walk?"

Hezekiah laughed too, but with no spirit. "In course she could not, master," he said. "Nathless, I'm one as holds with ancient old stories. 'Twere said—so my grandame towd me—as before Fair Frances were built up and barred, she used for to do curious things. But I've ne'er believed it, none I. How could a marble woman walk, quotha? Stiff enow, I dare lay my word!"

Upstairs, Mrs. Phœbe was helping the young wife to change her travelling garments for a gown of pink *crêpe des Indes*, embroidered lavishly with deep red roses. The woman had played Abigail to Mr. Selioke's mother, well-nigh thirty years ago, and her touch was still skilful. She was very outspoken about the loveliness of her present mistress's shoulders and arms; indeed, the lady blushed and protested at such warm praise.

"I warrant there's ne'er been as great a beauty 'mongst all the Selioke madams," said Phœbe, "unless so be as 'twere Fair Frances herself. But, Heavens, how I babble!" She crossed herself nervously. "I surely didna ought to speak to you of her."

Her hesitation interested Mrs. Selioke. "But who was Fair Frances?" she said. "Do you remember her? She was not Mr. Selioke's mother, that I do know."

"Nay, nor his grandam, howe'er many times removed," said the other. "Not even a kinswoman, either, since I've always understood she left no bairns at all, being first wife o' the squire o' that time, and dying soon after her marriage. Why, mistress, as like as none, you'ld see her as you were driving along here!"

"How could I see her if she's been dead for so long?" cried Mrs. Selioke amusedly. "And surely what is left of her poor body lies within the nearest parish church?"

"That is so," replied Phœbe. "Her mortal part does lie there in sober earnest. I mind owd folk saying that her coffin still rests in the vault; but as for t'other part, whether 'tis in heaven or hell's more nor anyone can say."

"There's some strange legend about the lady," said Mrs. Selioke. "Pray tell me; I love to hear such things. No books please me more than Mrs. Ann Radcliffe's. I think she's the most interesting author who ever wrote. You've surely read 'The Italian' and 'The Mysteries of Udolpho'?"

"Bless us all, I ne'er read a romance book in my life!" said Mrs. Phœbe. "But the tale about Fair Frances is queerer nor could be aught that appeared in print. Your mistress-ship will be pleased to pardon me telling it, howe'er, for 'tis o' a nature to make one unused to this country vastly uncomfortable."

Mrs. Selioke entreated, but the woman shamefacedly declined to satisfy her curiosity, and was nowise sorry when the master came merrily into the room with word that supper was already prepared. He cried out with pleasure when he saw his wife's gown. She had never worn it before, having destined it as a surprise for the first evening she spent under a roof of his own. He kissed her tenderly, unrestrained by Mrs. Phœbe's presence, then, with her little hand nestling in the crook of his elbow, accompanied her along the gallery. Midway between her room and the staircase head she paused to point to a lattice of oak near the floor.

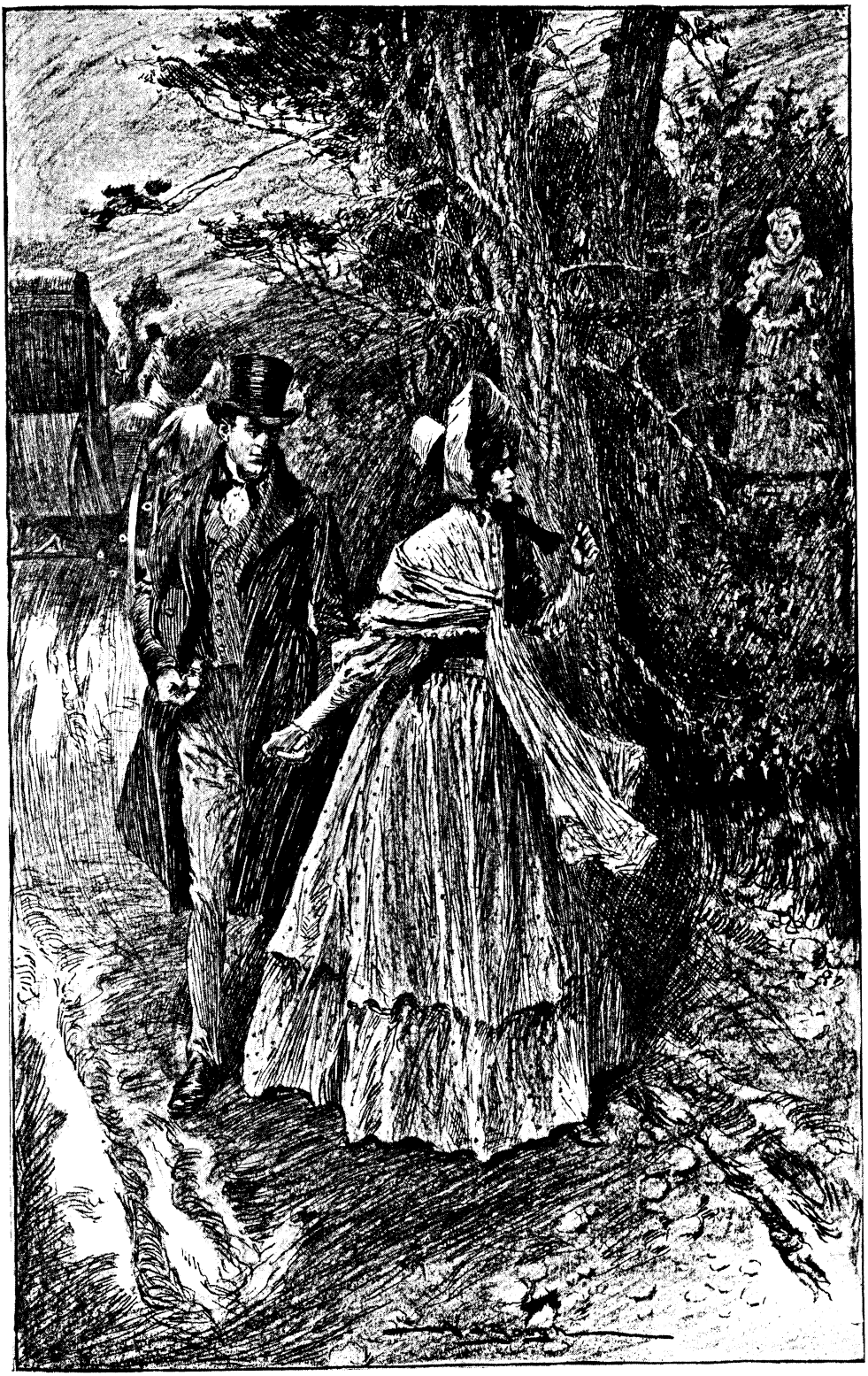
"What a curious thing!" she said. "Why is it there? It's like the grille of a confessional."

"My dearest!" said Mr. Selioke expostulatingly. "It's only an opening to light the passage that leads to the winter garden—the place our chamber overlooks. If you stoop, you will see the place—dark enough, in all conscience. Come, you are never hungry, but I declare that I'm sharp-set enough to devour a whole ox!"

She called him an ogre; they laughed and kissed again, and then descended to the dining-parlour, where a rough but handsome country meal was served.

Again and again she reverted to the subject of Fair Frances; each time he checked her with a very sober countenance. It was not until they had passed to the drawing-room—a pretty place, where the panelling was painted white, with faded rose garlands—that he gratified her morbid curiosity. She had been playing for a while on the little oblong clavichord—fashioned for his mother by one Thomas Haxby, of York—and when she was about to rise, he begged her to sing one or two of Haydn's canzonets.

"To my thinking, no living creature can do 'em such justice," he said. "The time I fell in love with you was when I heard about 'Patience on a Monument.'"



"The white figure still standing in its girdle of larches."

She left the stool, however, and came to his chair and laid her hand on his head.

"My dear Selioke," she said, "I could not sing for the life of me. I'm all in a fever of curiosity. I'm well aware that you think me childish and a fool, and I'm inclined to believe that you're right. I'll sing only on one condition, and that's if you tell me what I wish to know."

Her pleading voice made him weak as water. "My Caroline," he said, "the story is only a mad one, without a word of truth in't. And it's of a nature to distress you; believe me, I'd far rather you did not know it. I should have spoken freely and easily enough, but for the fact that sight of the woman—the figure, rather—in the open impressed me very disagreeably. When I lived here as a boy, she was well caged in stone and iron. If I had known the prison was broken, I'd not have brought you here, even for so short a time."

"But I like the country," said Mrs. Selioke. "It's pleasing and wild and remote. I mean that we shall live here as much as, or more than, in our other houses. I could wish nothing better than to stay, far away from the world of fashion, with my sweetest husband. And now out with the tale; I'm on pins and needles till I hear! Everything that you can tell me about Fair Frances I wish to know."

"In sober earnest I can tell little," he replied, "and that little came from hearsay when I was a child. The story's silly enough. I believed it then, but now it seems all a figment."

"Ah, my dearest, why do you tantalise me?" she cried. She filliped the pearls in her ears. "If ears could speak, you'd know how eager mine are."

"Then, since you must have it, she died within a few months of her marriage. What she had been, or whence she had come, I know not. All that I was told was that her effigy was carved by some foreigner, and that it was intended to stand atop of her tomb in the church. What happened there I cannot say, but before the year was out, the widower was compelled to remove it. The good parson had protested that all his flock would be damned else. Then for a time it stood here, in the great hall; but the gentleman having married again—my many-times-removed grandmother—it was necessary to have it taken away. His second wife is said to have threatened to leave him unless this were done. She was a woman of very strong will, so it is said, and though she brought no money into the family, she managed affairs so well that the estates increased considerably in her lifetime. She had a kind of mural chapel built for the figure; it was its absence that startled me so much to-day. In my boyhood I only saw Fair Frances through a rusty iron grating; she was shrouded then in a greenish light. I had no idea that the marble was still as white as snow. But Phœbe's husband tells me that the walls fell a month ago. You are surely not afraid—your colour is all gone?"

He put his arm around her neck and drew her face to his breast. "What could'st be afraid of?" he said. "Am I not here to keep all care away?"

"Ay, of what?" she whispered. "What mischief could a thing of stone do to you and me? I'll prove to you that I'm no coward. I'll pay you for your tale with my singing. You shall sit beside me and turn over the pages, just as though we weren't sober old married folk. But, first"—she pressed soft palms to his cheeks—"first you must tell me what they said about her—why there was so quaint a spite against a thing immovable—a thing with no life. Nay, do not prevaricate! If I was courageous enough to marry my dear bear of a Selioke, I can surely hear the rest. You hint at some devilry; the very thought is provocative to me."

"The tale was—was that she wrought mischief between man and wife," he said hesitatingly, "and that was why her successor imprisoned her amongst the trees."

Mrs. Selioke shrugged her pretty shoulders. "If you and I had lived in those times," she murmured, "she'd have had little success. Nothing in the world could ever harm our love. If I thought so, I believe that I should die here and now!"

Then she sat again on the needlework-covered stool, and began to sing in a tender and pretty little voice, which her husband believed ravishingly sweet. But after she had told how "the village seemed asleep or dead when Lubin was away," she surprised him by bursting into tears; whereupon he carried her to a settee and knelt beside her, and soothed her just as if she were a young child.

"My dear little one is weary," he said; "the journey has been too much for her. I shall take her upstairs to bed, and Phœbe shall undress her." And in the gentlest way imaginable he lifted her in his arms and bore her lightly to the chamber, staying with her until the comfortable housekeeper had unloosed the silken strings of her bodice.



"Soothed her just as if she were a young child."

Then, with another KISS, he turned to leave the place.

"I shall not be long," he said, drawing out his great gold watch. "Why, it's nigh eleven o'clock already! I had not thought it was so late. I'll be with you in an hour. I mean to walk about the gardens. I shall not go out of sight of the house. The rain has ceased, and the stars are out. I shall hunt for gilliflowers. When you wake in the morning, you'll find the rarest posy on your dressing-table."

When he was gone, Mrs. Selioke bade the woman do her work slowly. "I want to talk with you," she said. "Indeed, I do not think that I can sleep until you have told me something."

"Whate'er you ask, I'll tell," replied Mrs. Phœbe, "so long as 'tis nothing as'll put you about."

"Then what did Fair Frances really do?" asked the mistress, seizing the other's plump wrists and holding them firmly. "Mr. Selioke has told me much about her—he has told me that she bred ill-feelings betwixt man and wife."

"He did wrong," cried Mrs. Phœbe. "'Twas unwise o' him to unsettle you."

"But I made him," continued the wife. "He couldn't refuse for long—he's never refused me anything in his life. Now, pray do tell me; I will keep it all a secret. I want to hear exactly what did happen?"

The housekeeper was in a quandary. "I'd

go ten mile rather nor tell," she muttered. "You'd best none know—'tis only owd wicked tales——"

"But I must know," said Mrs. Selioke; "and if you won't speak of it, I must find some other means. Now, my dear, good Phœbe"—her voice became very cajoling—"do relieve my suspense! I could never bear to be kept in the dark!"

"Well, then," replied the other, "if you must know, you must. 'Twas said—and this is all I can tell, for I know nought more—'twas said that she *walked!*"

"Heavens," exclaimed Mrs. Selioke laughingly, "what an odd superstition! How could a statue walk?"

"'Tis only fool's talk," said Mrs. Phoebe. "I ne'er believed it. But they say that her husband's second lady saw it walking, and that that was why she had it built up. Indeed, she even had the parson read holy words, bidding all such queer ways cease."

Mrs. Selioke's spirits had lightened. She talked cheerily, spoke of the beauty of the place, and of her delight in resting for the first time in a home belonging to her husband. She soon retired to the great velvet-hung bed, and Mrs. Phœbe, who was unaccustomed to such late hours, withdrew to the back quarters, where she rested with her husband and son and the women-servants.

But the young wife found herself unable to lie still, and after a few minutes rose, and tightening the strings of her cambric cap, and covering her shoulders with a silk shawl, went to the window and knelt on the cushion, looking through the dimmed glass upon the starlit garden. Soon she perceived her husband walking beside the mouldering brick wall, ever and anon pausing to gather the finest of the drenched flowers.

Her fingers touched the casement latch; she was minded to turn it and to call him by name, when of a sudden her heart contracted as though shrinking from icy bands, and a faint cry rose from her lips. For at some little distance from him, in the shadow of a gigantic cedar, a woman was slowly stirring. She was tall and wonderfully made, dressed in a fashion such as one only sees in the pictures by Tudor painters, the fabric of her gown gorgeously coloured and sparkling with rich jewels. The face was scarce visible, yet Mrs. Selioke divined that it was the most beautiful, the most terrible face in the whole world.

The husband who was turning now towards the house, his arms laden with the posy, seemed absolutely unaware of the apparition. Once more Mrs. Selioke strove to undo the fastening of the window, so that she might cry out some frenzied warning; but before the casement swung back, he had already passed out of sight, with the woman following almost at arm's length.

In another moment the young wife had caught up a candle and left the chamber. In the gallery she stumbled and fell to her knees near by the oaken lattice that lighted the garden passage. A dim light burned below. Pressing her face to the framework, she saw Selioke turning round in amazement, as if someone had called him by name. Then, with her hand pressed to her heart, she crept down the staircase and made her way to where he stood.

The woman had entered. Mrs. Selioke saw both arms outstretched for the posy, saw her husband make one step forward, as though yielding, then draw back. And she herself ran to him and caught the gilliflowers to her own bosom. He started curiously, then threw his arms about her, pressing her fiercely to his side.

Then both began to laugh, and did not cease for a full five minutes. Strangely enough, when the paroxysm was over, each found the other's face wet with tears. They were quite alone in the hall; the garden beyond was silent and full of sleep.

Selioke left his wife and went to close the heavy door. When he came back, he was smiling as though nothing extraordinary had happened. The pressure on her arm, as he led her up the staircase, was almost painful, and yet she made no protest.

"My dearest, you startled me most terribly!" he said. "I could have sworn that you were a ghost."

"You saw nothing?" she said breathlessly. "You cannot have seen what I saw."

"I give you my word that I saw nothing," he made answer. "You are excited and overtired; in the morning you will be better. You want sleep."

"I shall not sleep here," said Mrs. Selioke. "Every candle in the room shall be lighted. I shall sit up. If you rest, I will watch over you. And in the morning—in the morning——"

"What?" said her husband, seeing that she wished him to speak.

"In the morning you shall take me from Unthank——"

"My dearest, I am yours to command," said he.



THE HEIGHT OF LUXURY.

FARMER FURROW: Well, well! The conveniences of these hotels nowadays beats all I ever heard tell on!

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

ALMANACS.

By John Payne.

I HAVE so many of them, and they are all old ones—none of them will do—for at the beginning of each year I receive dozens from my relatives and friends. On the second of January they disappear and hide themselves till the first of January of the following year. Then they will reappear in all their glory, hustle the new ones out of the way, and I shall be led hopelessly astray for at least six months, till I discover that what I take to be a 1911 almanac is really one for 1910, and I realise why I have been going to church steadily on Monday, and deploring the small attendance.

Almanacs are never there when wanted. They possess this habit in common with a good many other things, such as time-tables, pencils, stamps, and so on.

I am one of those persons who are always in need of an almanac. I never can remember the day of the week or the date. I know Saturday, because it is early-closing day, but after Monday I run amuck all the other days of the week until Saturday comes round again.

I often wish that I was one of those clever people who, knowing that last Tuesday was the seventh of the month, can tell you at once that Thursday week will be the—er—the er—just wait till I have worked it out on a bit of paper—will be the twenty-third. I think that is right. But these people do it in their heads without a moment's thought. Oh, it is positively careless of them, but *so* useful! They never send out invitations to a dinner for a Wednesday, the fourteenth, and when you go to mark it down in your diary, you find that Wednesday is not the fourteenth, but the seventeenth, and you are left

wondering which is the day you have really been asked for. They always know the date of Easter Sunday, and will tell you the day of the week on which Christmas falls for the next ten years. Leap Year they know by instinct. These kind of people always pay their bills, and invariably know when quarter day comes round. I wish I did.

Talking of diaries, I have never kept one; I have often tried to. Neither have I ever met a person who has. I have read diaries written by those dead and gone, and it was quite evident that they were kept by persons who made a profession of it, and never did anything else. They would not have had the time.

But to return to almanacs. I became very tired of continually going to parties on the wrong night, and never knowing which day of the month it was. So I decided to buy one of those continuous, all-the-year-round date-indicators—things made of wood, with knobs at the side which you turn. But that hardly proved satisfactory. It worked too easily at first, and was always jumping two days ahead, which confused me a bit; and finally, after being sworn at for some time, it stuck. The seventeenth day of March was the day it stuck, and it has not moved since.

So there is the seventeenth of March always staring me in the face. It is a silly date, and has no bearing on anything, as far as I know. April the first would have been a much more sensible day for it to stop working. Perhaps something is going to happen to me on the seventeenth of March in the far future; but as it does not tell the years, I suppose I must wait and see.

In the meanwhile, I derive much amusement from my friends trying to put it right. But their efforts are futile. On coming into my room, and on catching sight of my almanac, they exclaim: "That's the wrong date!" Whereupon they take it up to put it right. They twist the knobs one way, then they twist them the other. They hold it sideways or upside down. Eventually they shake it, and, at the finish, it still shows the seventeenth of March. It seems to irritate them. Well, it used to irritate me at first, but I have become used to it, and will not let them fulfil their desire of pulling it to pieces. I have been asked to throw it away, but I cannot. Something tells me that on a seventeenth day of March in one, two, three, five years' time, I may have a legacy left me, or be bitten by a dog, or something cheery of the same kind.

It has become like a dear friend. And now, once every year, it tells me the correct date—that is to say, when I know it is the seventeenth of March. That information, of course, I have to gather from other sources.



POOR SPORT.

MOTHER (to Tommy, who has come in somewhat battered): How often have I told you not to play with that vulgar Johnny Jones?
TOMMY: I haven't been *playing* with him.

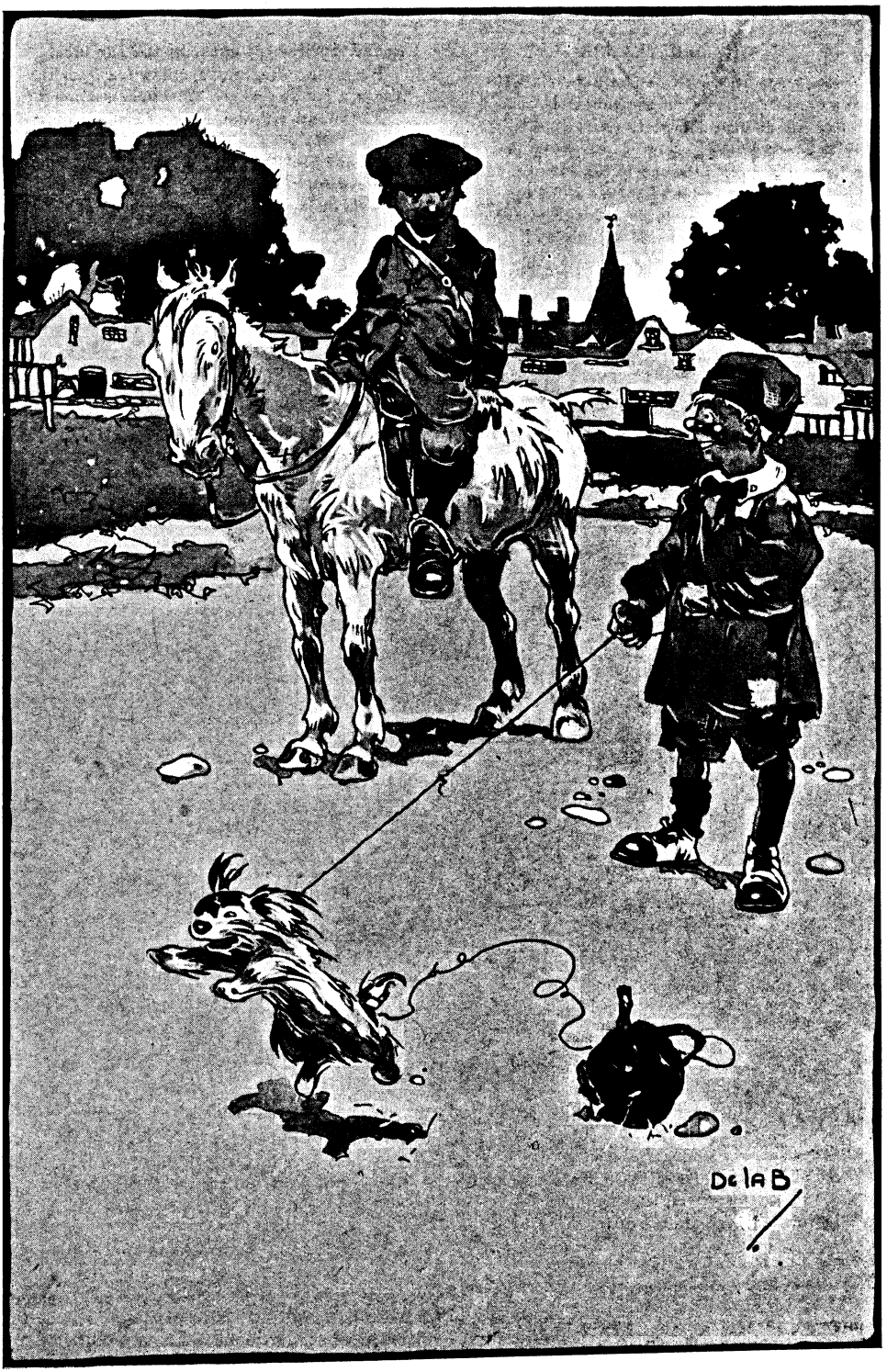
THE visitor rang the bell, and the door was opened by five wild-eyed youngsters, who were towing the house-cat around by a gas-hose.

"I heard that your mother was up at the Mothers' Congress, delivering a lecture on 'How to Bring Up Children,'" announced the visitor. "Am I right?"

The oldest boy pointed to the overturned chairs, the scratched wall-paper, and the broken table, and said simply: "Well, it looks like it, doesn't it?"

The mother had talked earnestly to her young son, emphasising that he must be good if his soul was some day to go to Heaven. Evidently impressed, the youngster asked—

"But, mother, if only my soul goes to Heaven, what am I going to hang my braces to?"



GETTING HIS OWN BACK.

KIND-HEARTED TOMMY: You'll catch it, Willie, if your mother sees you!

WICKED WILLIE: I don't care! I told her something'd happen when she pinched my pocket-money last week for "Our Dumb Friends' League."

THE OLD TEA-CUP.

How many dead lips on this rim have closed?
Perchance Belinda's, in the times of Anne,
Piquant and dainty, delicately rosed
With scented rouge, here rested, while her fan
Conveyed a roguish message to Sir Plume;
And mayhap Millamant took a dish of tea
Herefrom, and made the modish Congreve fume
Because she blew a kiss to Wycherley!

Dust are the locks of which they were so vain,
And quenched their speaking eyes! No more is Plume
Proud of the conduct of his clouded cane,
And Congreve and his wit are in the tomb!

But this old cup is warm and scented yet
With Millamant's kisses and Belinda's sighs,
And as I drink from it, my cheeks grow wet
With the salt dew of my remembering eyes.

For in a former life I was their slave;
My prone heart worshipped their dear fluttering feet,
That trod upon it scornfully, yet gave
A tap in passing which sent all the heat
Out of my burning soul into my face!
Oh, wondrous women of the alluring smile,
Oh, perished queens of wit and teasing grace,
How skilled you were in flirting and in guile!

In the remorseless dusk, as the sun dips,
I drink my fragrant evening tea from this,
And set my lips where Millamant set her lips,
And breathe the perfume of Belinda's kiss
Again! Oh, dead days of my former life,
What have you left me, what is with me yet?
An outward calmness and an inward strife,
A torturing memory and a vain regret!

Wallace Bertram Nichols.



THE OBSCURITY OF HOME.

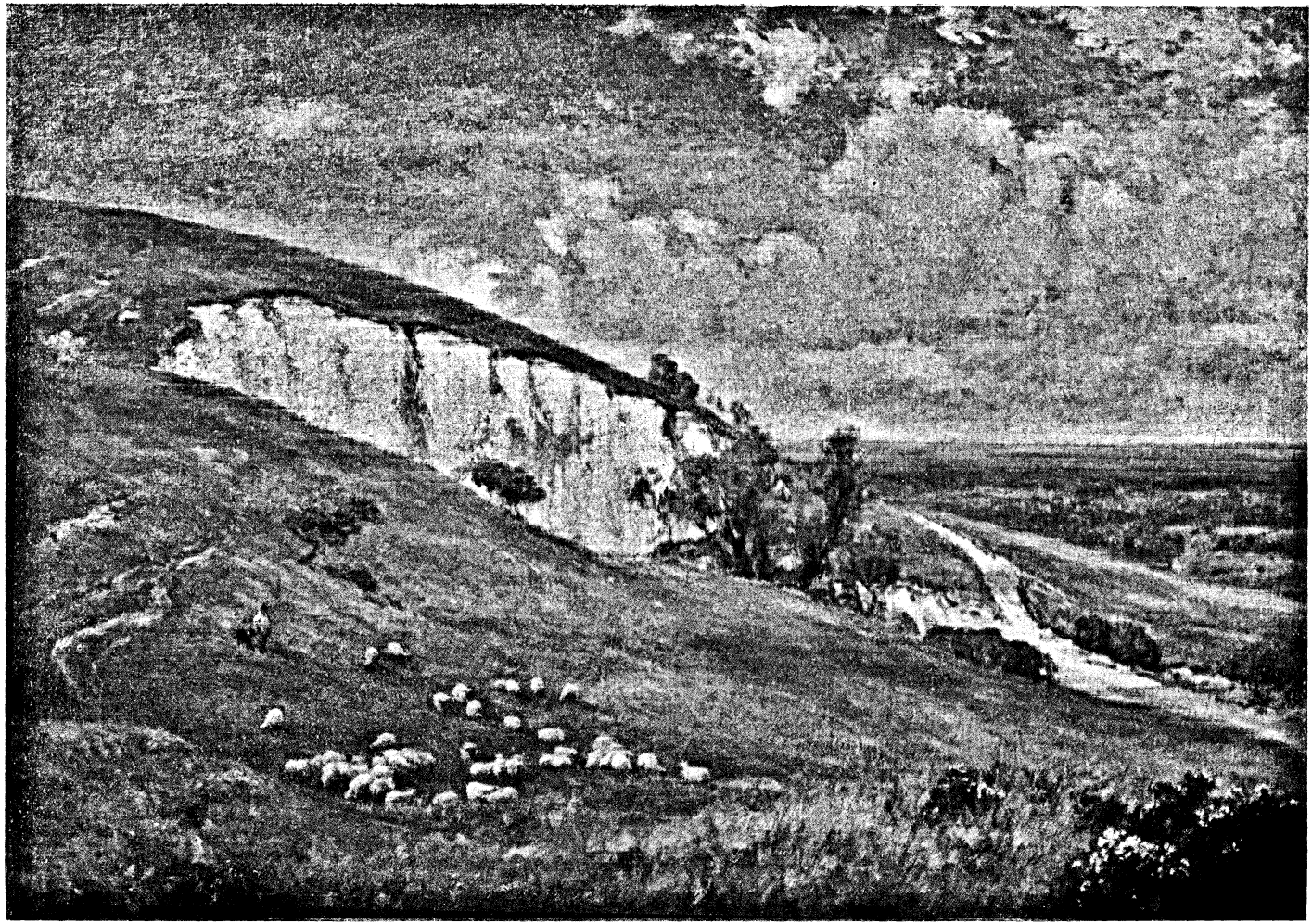
WIFE OF GREAT CHESS-PLAYER: Where is your master, Jane?
NEW HOUSEMAID: Och, sure 'e's in there amusin' of 'imself with 'is toy soldiers!

It's a good story that has no returning.

ALL the people are divided into two parts—those who wait for the bargain sales, and those who can afford not to.

"PHYSICAL culture, father, is perfectly lovely!" exclaimed an enthusiastic young girl just home from college. "Look! To develop the arms, I grasp the rod by one end and move it slowly from right to left."

"Well, well," exclaimed her father, "what won't science discover! If that rod had straw at the other end, you'd be sweeping!"



"A CHALK-PIT ON THE SUSSEX DOWNS." BY SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

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"HOUGHTON MILL." BY SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

THE ART OF SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

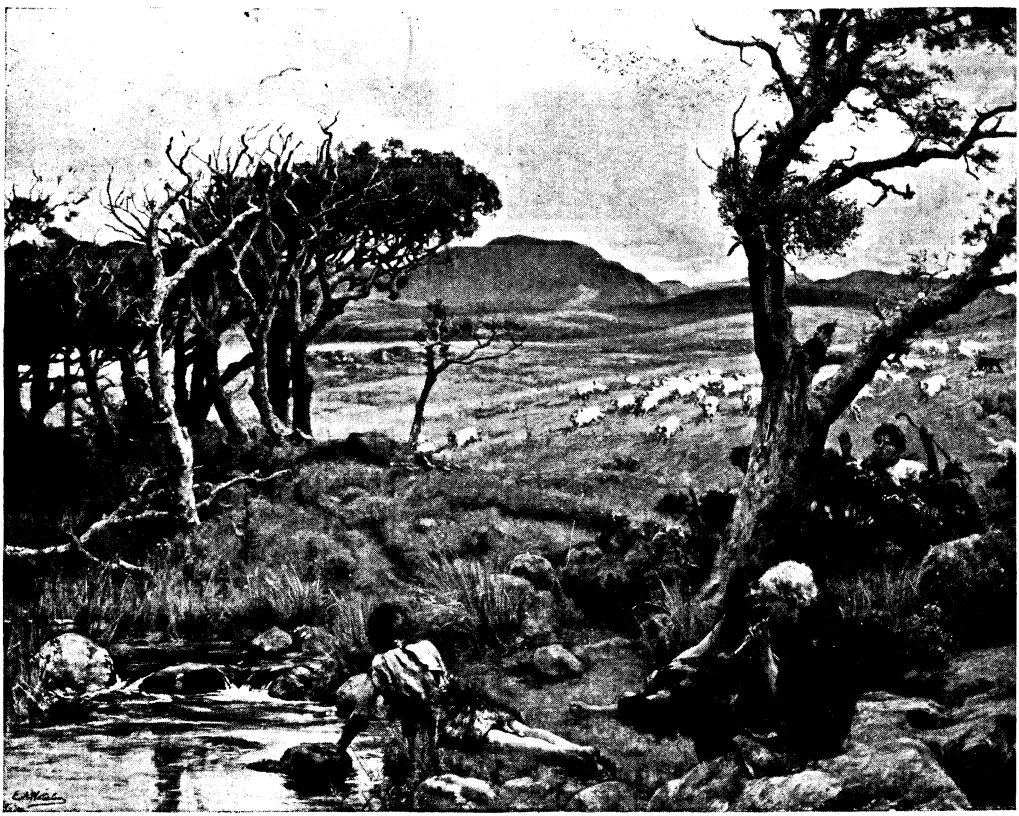
BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

EQUALLY gifted in the facile use of two opposing mediums, oil and water, with a quite singular power of selecting subject, with a pictorial vision that has been rarely surpassed, since he is the possessor of an enchanting capacity of design, Sir Ernest Waterlow stands to-day a conspicuous figure in the world of paint. Trees, pasture-lands, waterways, hedges, hay-stacks, cottages, woods, moorlands, marshes, he, with a rare dexterity, makes pictorial use of each, and presents them to us under varying aspects of light with a clarity of vision and a delicate draughtsmanship which appear to give actual refreshment to the eye.

Born in 1850—the son of the late Mr. A. C. Waterlow, of the well-known firm of printers and lithographers—Ernest Waterlow has all his life been associated with Art. Although at first it was the practical rather than the imaginative side with which he was made conversant, we must take it that, from the accident of his surroundings, there was no period in which he was not familiar with, at any rate, the reproductions of masterpieces of paint.

First schooling was given to him at the collegiate establishment of Eltham. Afterwards, with his mother, then a widow, and family, he went to Heidelberg; but on the outbreak of the Prusso-Austrian War in 1866, they migrated to Lausanne, and here, as a boy of between sixteen and seventeen, we must assume him to have been inspired to respond to what must have been a natural call to painting as a profession. Here he was fortunate enough to fall in with M. Bocion, and to receive from him first instruction in oil-painting. The year spent under this artist's tutelage undoubtedly placed the young Ernest Waterlow on the right road, and helped him to form that admirable taste which has been from the first a distinguishable quality of his work.

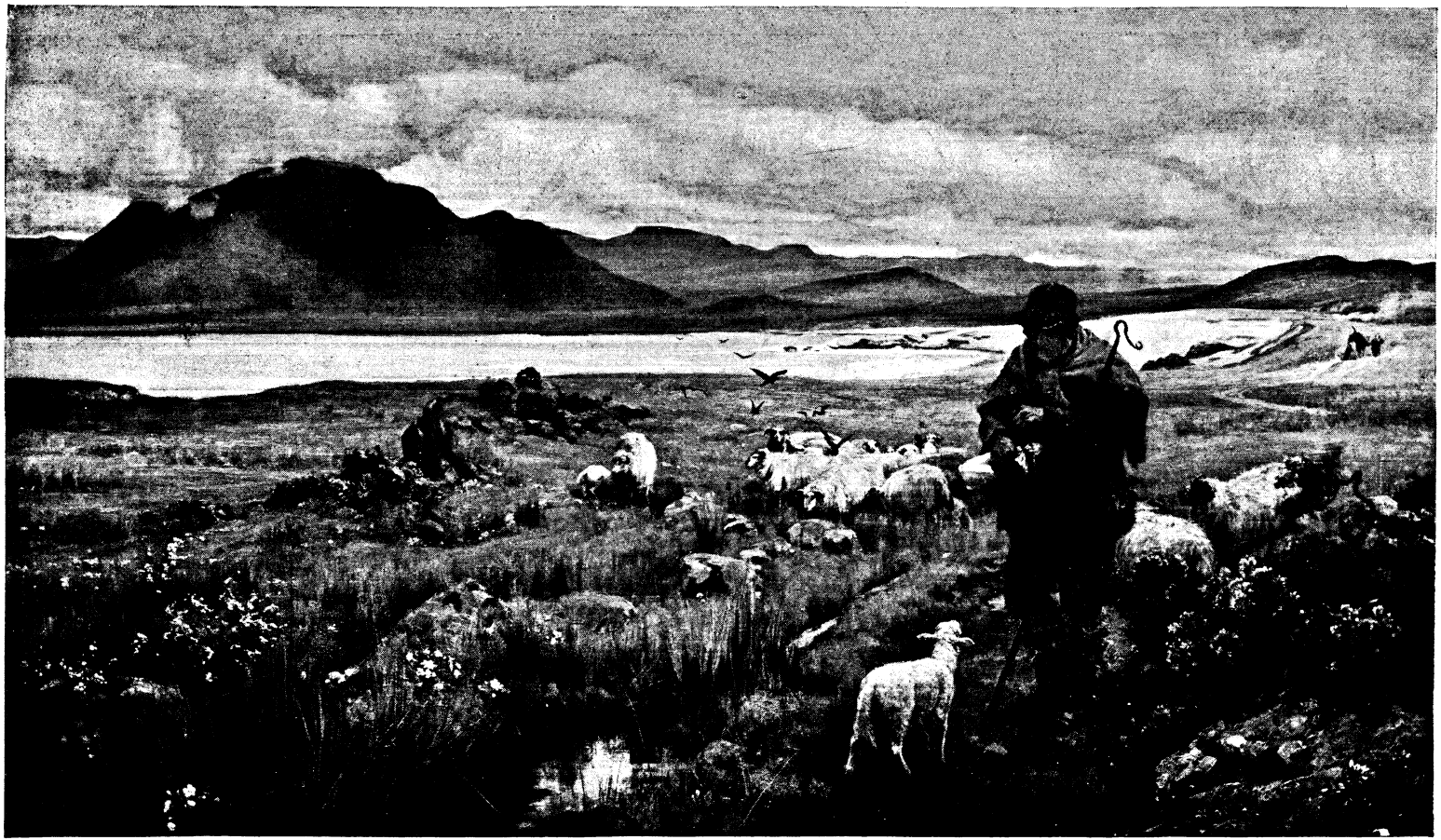
It is difficult to over-estimate the control exercised by one man's talent over that of another. It is, indeed, impossible that the sensitive perception of the artist should fail gradually to absorb and be saturated by the knowledge shown by others greater than himself. High above the populous plains filled by the living stand a few dead giants who put forth imperceptible tendrils as of instruction, with, as it were, the object of helping seekers after truths to attain by their help those they have



"WOLF!" BY SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

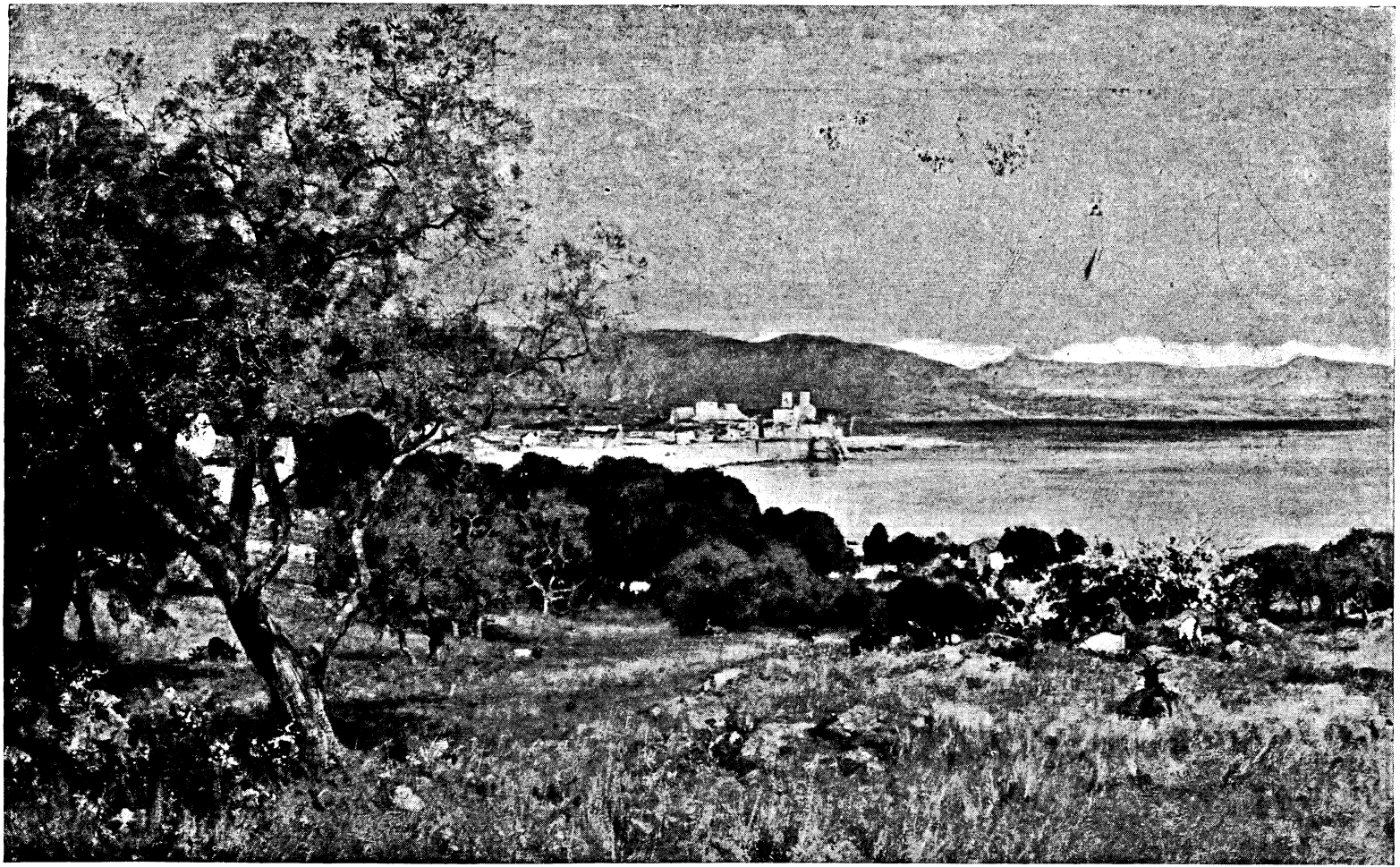
recorded. Constable was an ardent admirer of Claude. "How enchanting!" he says of "The Narcissus." "How lovely it is, far—very far surpassing any other landscape I ever beheld!" And Claude's influence it is, according to Leslie, that may be more or less traced through the whole of Constable's work. Not that by any means he limited his admiration to Claude, for he was an ardent admirer of Titian, of the two Poussins, and of Richard Wilson. Then he, in his turn, left a heritage of help to the great modern Frenchman, Corot, who stands with Claude "in the artistic completeness of his formula," whilst he owes to Constable that sense of weather and sincerity of observation which distinguishes the work of the English master. At the same time one must not forget to take into consideration that the refinement which makes of Corot perhaps the most consummate landscape artist who has ever lived, was the outcome of his individual vision, even though it was built upon the knowledge he had acquired through study of the works of his two great predecessors.

Ours is the endeavour to point out the special and actual good qualities in which an artist excels—to point the effective personal note which is illustrated by that much-worn saying, "the style is the man." Patient, literal, exact, faultless in execution, work may be, but all these qualities are as nothing unless the imaginative vision of the painter is perceived to lie upon it like a bloom. We must consider Sir Ernest Waterlow as possessing this individual vision; he sees the



"THE ORPHAN." BY SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

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'LA CÔTE D'AZUR." BY SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

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beauty of the world through his own eyes, and has the happy faculty of putting it down on canvas as he sees it. To him, and to all other men so gifted, we feel a glow of gratitude for the loan of their faculty of sight which they make to us.

Sir Ernest Waterlow himself feels that he owes a large debt to M. Bocion, of Ouchy, under whose influence he was early to come; and if M. Bocion cannot be classed with the giants, he was undoubtedly a very sincere and accomplished painter, who possessed rare insight into the picturesque.

"A graceful painter, with a tender colour feeling and an excellent technical style," is how Mr. Marion Spielmann sums up those powers which seem specially to fit Sir Ernest for the post of historian in paint of England's sunny hours.

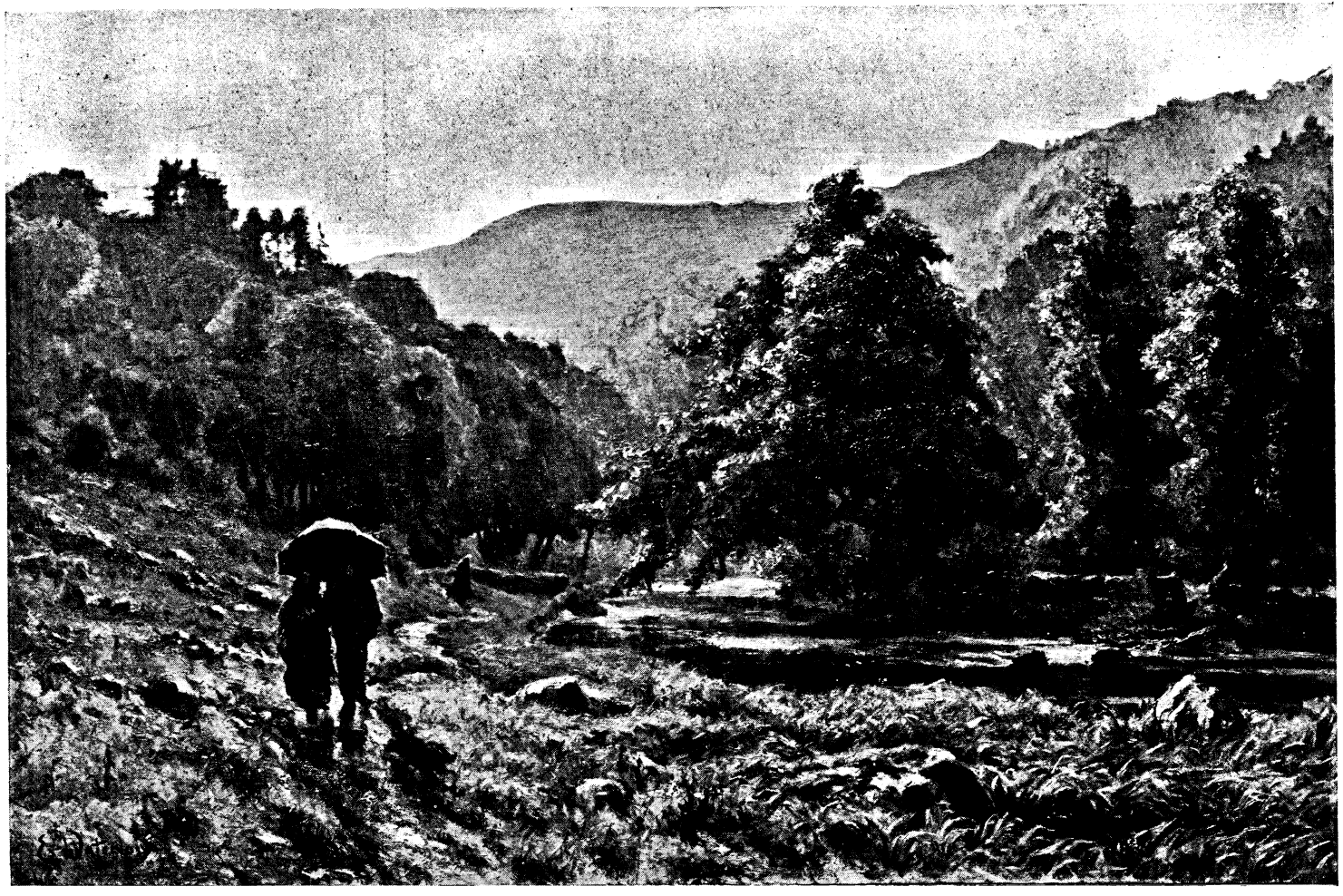
With the malignity of Nature, her lurid storm effects, her harsh contours, her barren wastes, Sir Ernest has little in common, but with her suave smiles, her sumptuous harmonies, her sunny joyousness, he is in complete accord; and these aspects he sets himself the task to reproduce, holding the first vision intact, putting it down on canvas, ever proof against the insidious appeals of too definite local colour and exuberant palette, and with a sincerity that is studied rather than impulsive and always entirely coherent. If we mass his output of oil and water-colour, we have something like four hundred pictures from which to choose our examples. Of this immense productiveness we can naturally mention very few, but "The Close of a Midsummer's Day," "The Hour When Daylight Dies," "Sheltered Pastures," "A Tranquil Stream," "Summer Afternoon," "Golden Autumn," "A Sussex Homestead," "The Thames From Richmond Hill," "The Land of Olives," "The Orphan," "Houghton Mill," "The Mists of Early Autumn," "La Côte d'Azur," "Through the Wood," "Pastoral Provençal," "In Suffolk Marshes," and



"FRIENDS OR FOES?" BY SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

"A Chalk-Pit on the Sussex Downs," hold the sumptuous aspect which the artist finds to be peculiarly suited to his art, and each holds some poetic expression of rural life.

Now and then he introduces human figures and cattle into his landscapes, considering them and handling them, indeed, as if they were necessary parts of the scene within which they are placed, and treating them always in relation to their aerial setting, so that they are never forced upon the attention, but are an integral part of the whole. In this way he gives us sheep feeding in the Fens, cows grazing in the Suffolk marshes, women toilers in the woods,



"A SUMMER SHOWER." BY SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

From the picture in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, reproduced by permission of the Corporation of Liverpool.



"THE LONELY CHURCH." BY SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

shepherds watching their flocks, fisher-folk collecting oysters, girls gathering flowers and feeding chickens, children shrinking timidly from a flock of geese. He casts a glamour of romance upon the ordinary occupations of rural life, whether they are being pursued in England, in Bavaria, or in France.

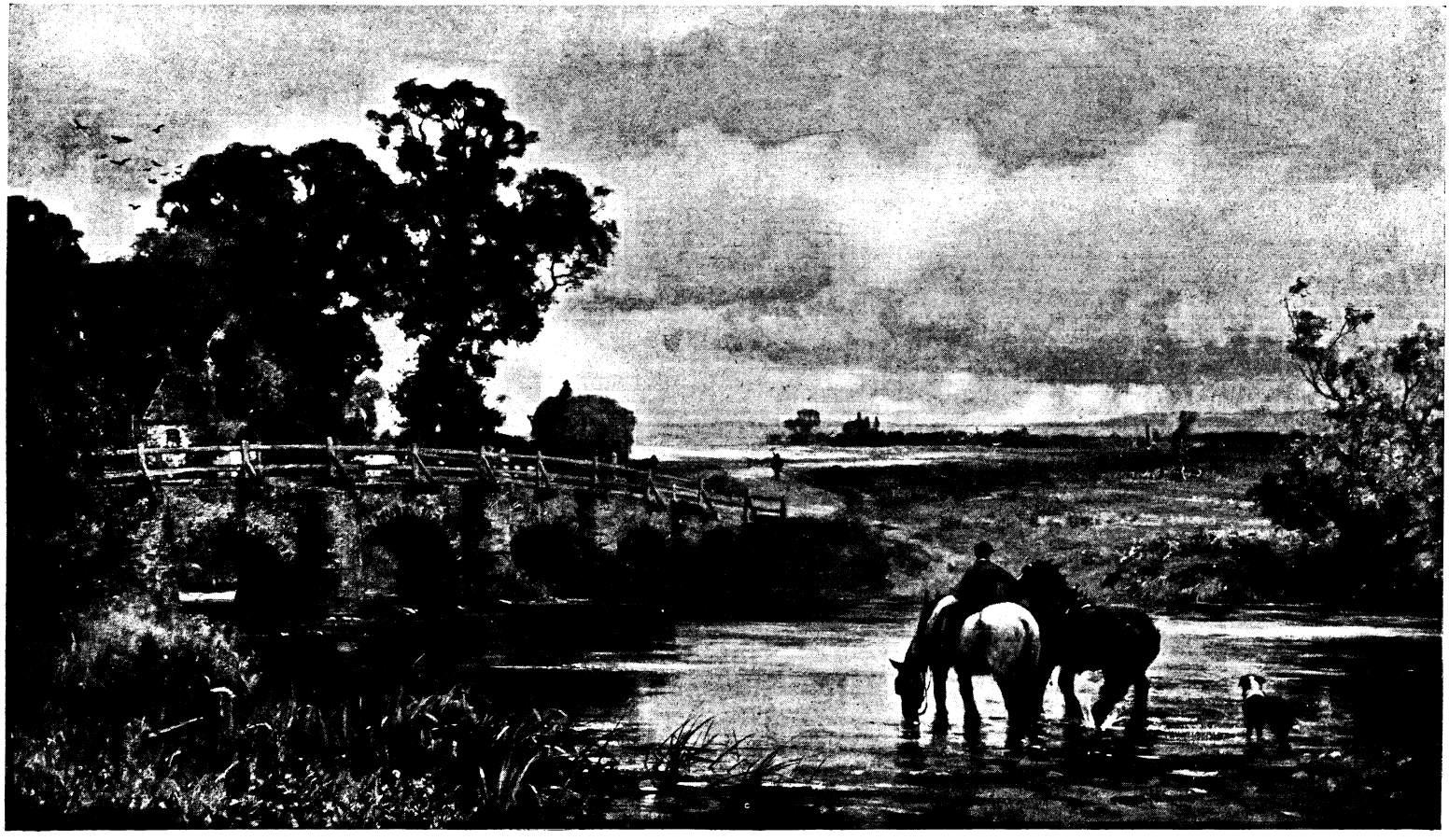
The year spent at Lausanne in close communion with M. Bocion gave the young painter a magnificent start; and when, in 1867, he returned to England and entered himself as student in Carey's School of Art, he had not only well tested his strength by experiment, but was already too biassed in favour of pursuing the landscape branch of art to benefit by the figure training he might have got there. He wisely left and turned his attention to sketching from Nature, until, in 1872, he entered the Academy Schools, exhibiting in that same year, upon the Academy walls, a picture entitled "Evening in Dovedale, Derbyshire," which showed him alive to the beauty of Nature, and to have already mastered much of the theory if not as yet the whole practice of Art. The year 1873 found him the winner of the Turner gold medal, and again an exhibitor with "Passing Showers," painted in the forest of Glen Tanar, Aberdeenshire, which received family encouragement, for it was bought by the young painter's uncle, Sir Sydney Waterlow, Bart. From now we find him established in a studio of his own in Hayter House, Marylebone.

Recognition of his talent came to him very early, and honours. In 1880 he was elected an Associate of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours; in 1890 he was made an Associate of the Royal Academy, and in 1902 a full Member of that body. In 1895 he was created a Member of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours—now Royal—and in 1897 succeeded Sir John Gilbert as the Society's President. This, perhaps, which carried with it the honour of knighthood, is the greatest distinction which has been conferred upon Sir Ernest Waterlow. The history of the old Water-



"THE RESTING-PLACE." BY SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

Colour Society—compiled by John Lewis Roget, published by Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co.—gives us an accurate idea of how, within a hundred years' limit, this beautiful art has been evolved from the pencil drawings, washed and stained with colour, as we know them in the topographic prints of gentlemen's seats, of views of counties, or parochial antiquities, at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. One exception to the slow evolution of water-colour painting we must, however, make, for we think ourselves justified in saying that Turner, the actual contemporary of men who were employed on the colouring of topographical drawings, was



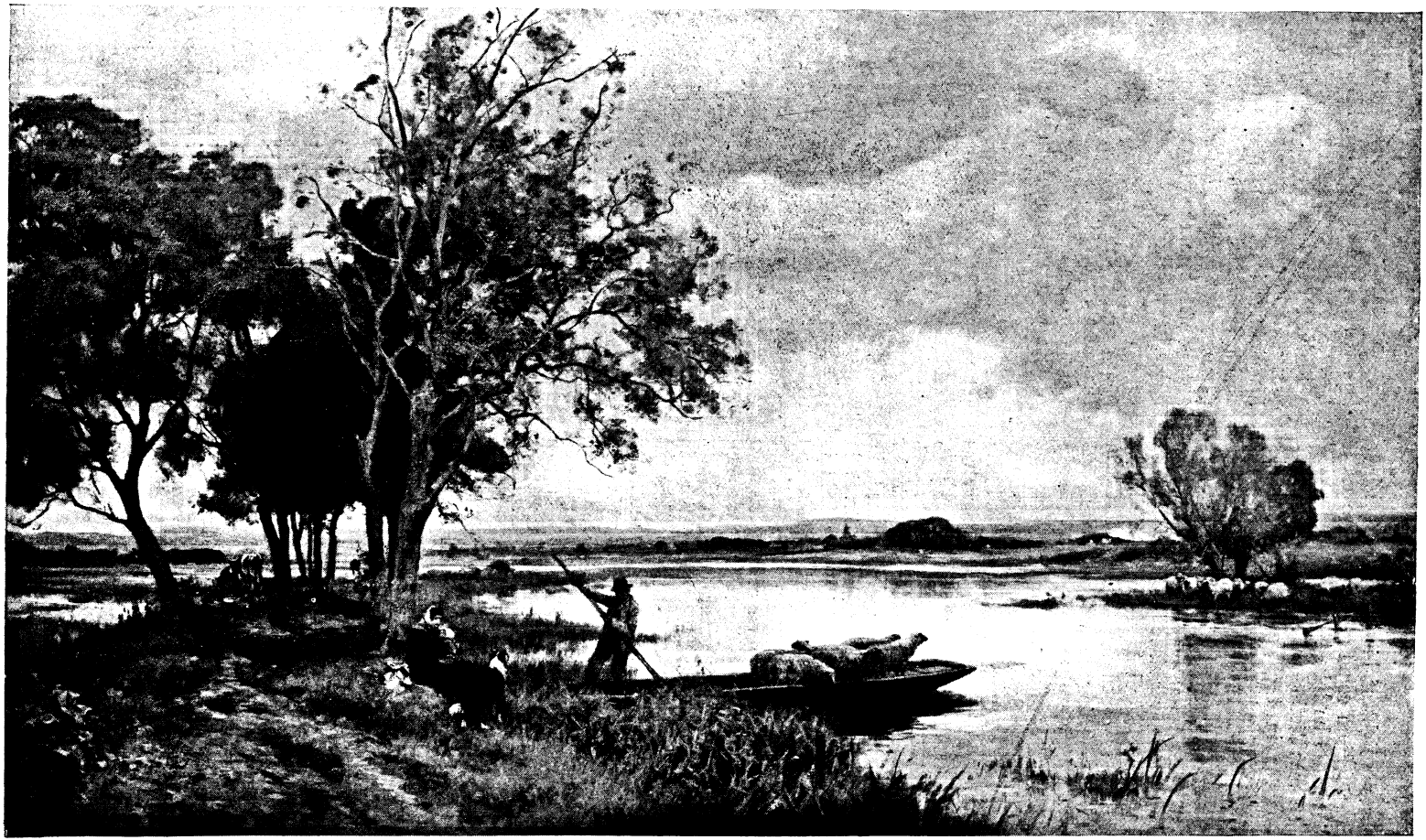
"CLOUDY JUNE." BY SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

Reproduced by permission of the Art Union of London, Strand, W.C., publishers of the large etching



"GOLDEN AUTUMN." BY SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

From the original in the McCulloch Collection, reproduced by permission of Mrs. Coutts Michie.



"AUTUMN FLOODS." BY SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

able, by the light of his genius, to see how the new medium could and should be used. No sooner did he take it up, in conjunction with Thomas Girtin—who died at the age of twenty-seven in 1802, and to whom, with himself, the title of originator of the natural method of water-colour painting in its present form is due—than he painted pictures in the new medium, the marvellous qualities of which have never since been surpassed.

In 1768 the Royal Academy was founded, and in time opened its doors to the men who were painting in water-colour; but these found their pictures so badly hung in the galleries of the new institution that Nicholson, Pocock, Pyne and Wells, the two Varleys, the two Nattes, with William S. Gilpin as president, formed themselves into the committee of the body which, after many constructions and reconstructions, is now known as the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours. It opened its first exhibition in Lower Brook Street in 1805. The second exhibition was held in 1806, and the receipts from visitors and catalogues, after all expenses were paid, left a balance of £440 to be divided between the members of the Society. This year and the next, Richard Westall was president. John Glover succeeded Westall in office in 1808, and R. Reinagle filled the presidential chair from 1809 to 1812, and was succeeded by F. Nicholson, who gave place, in 1814, to T. Smith, who was followed by J. Glover, J. Cristall, J. Smith, and G. F. Robson. Copley Fielding occupied the presidential chair from 1832 to 1855. J. F. Lewis reigned for three years, and was succeeded by Fred Taylor in 1858. Sir John Gilbert took upon himself presidential duties in 1871, and, upon his death, Sir Ernest Waterlow was elected.

It was not until 1882 that the name of "Royal" was conferred upon the old Water-Colour Society, and diplomas granted to its members; and now, to be head of a society so recognised, and which has included amongst its members, not only men like Peter de Windt, David Cox, Copley Fielding, Cozens, and Cotman, but modern men of the power of Fred Walker, Henry Moore, William Hunt, Holman Hunt, Albert Moore, David Murray, and George Clausen, is an honour of which Sir Ernest Waterlow is not only deserving, but to which he is very much alive.

That his work has improved rather than deteriorated since the honours of national purchase, of the Academy, of presidentship, and of knighthood have been conferred upon him is strong argument for his respect for Art.

Perhaps one of the reasons why he is so successful in obtaining cohesion of effect in his pictures is that he paints them in his studio, for it is impossible for the painter to preserve that unity which is so necessary for a work of art in the distractions of shifting lights. Small, vivid, truthful notes of colour, of the relation of one object to another—these he makes on the spot, and the memory of all he sees is embodied in rapid sketches made—as a glance at the titles of his pictures shows—in Derbyshire, in

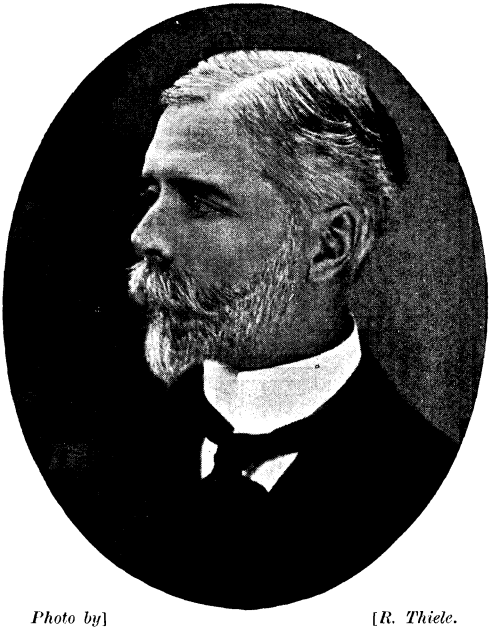


Photo by [*R. Thiele.*

SIR ERNEST A. WATERLOW, R.A.,
President of the Royal Water-Colour Society.

Scotland, in Wales, in Berkshire, in Cornwall, in Ireland, in old Provence, in Surrey, in Suffolk, and not infrequently on the Riviera.

The National Gallery of British Art holds his "Galway Gossips," Liverpool possesses his "Forest Oak," Preston his "La Côte d'Azur," Manchester his "Warkworth Castle," Hull his "The Quarry." Capetown, just before the outbreak of the Boer War, bought for its National Gallery his "Launching the Salmon Boat, Achill Island," whilst the galleries of New Zealand and Australia—Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, and Auckland—have specimens of his work.

THE WEAKLING.

By JUSTUS MILES FORMAN,

Author of "The Garden of Lies," "The Quest," "Bianca's Daughter," etc.

MISS VERNON came wearily into her little salon at the Ritz, and sank down in the most convenient chair with the air of one who can go no farther. Her aunt, writing letters at a desk in the corner, cocked an eye at her and turned half about for a better look.

"You give one the impression of being done up," said she.

Miss Vernon began a feeble struggle with one glove and shook her head.

"Done up? I'm exhausted—finished—dead! I've been to the Salon with the Ste. Maries. We did both the 'Old' and the 'New' in one afternoon, and the result is, as you see, death. One really should be pushed about such places in a wheeled chair, like a nice old gentleman we saw there to-day. He was riding about quite merrily from room to room, and exclaiming '*Affreux! affreux!*' at almost every picture he passed. He rather liked the ladies bathing in forest pools—or just about to bathe—but he called all the landscapes *plats d'épinards*. Ste. Marie says that is very ancient slang, but it pleased me. Plates of spinach!

"Oh, I found a new painter—quite wonderful. He's a Greek—a sort of combination of Chéret and Sargent. More Chéret than Sargent, I'm afraid, but I liked his work very much. It's fresh."

"Have you had tea?" inquired the older woman, and Miss Vernon said "No."

"Do let's have it at once. I'm famished and *so* tired. The Ste. Maries wanted to go to Colombin's or Rumpelmeyer's, but I wouldn't because I thought—Dane Villars might come here to-day, and I didn't want to miss him." She hesitated an instant over the name, and her aunt saw that she dropped her eyes and began once more to struggle with the glove that was so hard to pull off.

"You see, I wrote to him yesterday to say that we were here, and, as I've had no answer, I thought he probably meant to come in person."

It may be that she felt conscious of scrutiny—became uncomfortable under it, for she rose to her feet and crossed to the row of windows that stood open to the sweet summer air. There were flower-boxes outside the windows, and more flowers below in the garden court. The sound of gentle, high-pitched voices came up to the girl's ears with the sound of violins somewhere within the hotel. They were playing the familiar barcarolle out of the "Contes d'Hoffmann," and for an instant Miss Vernon wondered just why that barcarolle seemed to fall pat with the thought of Dane Villars. Then she remembered that he had loved it, and instantly there came before her the last occasion upon which they had heard it together—three years ago, at a dinner-party at Claridge's. She had been very, very young then, a *débutante*, and that dinner-party had loomed great and high in her eyes—a species of funeral feast—for Villars was, on the next morning, to go to Paris, taking, it appeared to her, the greater part of Heaven's sunshine with him.

She remembered how he had sent a waiter to ask the band to play the little barcarolle, and she remembered the look of his face when he turned to her.

"It's the last time. I go marching out to win my spurs to the music I love best." The very young girl had managed a smile, though she had rather wept—she remembered that smile with a faint pride—and, since the pain at her heart must be hidden deep, had even laughed, criticising.

"Isn't it a little trivial, perhaps—Offenbach? One would think that something rather more martial—the 'Marseillaise' or 'Onward, Christian Soldiers'—even Sousa." But the young man who was setting out to be the new Velasquez had smiled his self-confident smile and said—

"It'll do for me; I like it."

There was a knock at the door, and a servant came in with two cards. The elder woman

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looked at them, and up over her glasses to where her niece stood half turned from the open window.

"It's Rafael Michelangelo Villars, as you doubtless surmise. I think I shall flee. I was never one to spoil good sport. I'll just pop in on the Morrisons, upstairs. I half promised them. Shall I have tea sent to you?"

"Oh, yes, please," said Miss Vernon. "And thanks very much. I do rather want to see Dane alone. It has been three years."

The servant took his orders and bowed himself out. Miss Vernon's aunt gathered up such letters as she had finished, and disappeared into her own room, saying, as she closed the door—

"I now tactfully withdraw. Remember it to my credit," and Miss Vernon was left standing in the open window. Somewhat later she awoke from a sort of apathy and dashed to a near-by mirror, into which she frowned with every evidence of disapproval. She said—

"My dear, you look a perfect fright! Goodness me!" She prodded her hair at either side with expert fingers, and altered the tilt of her hat with something of a jerk. She returned to the window just as there came another knock. The same liveried servant announced "Monsieur Veelair!" waved a magnificent gesture, and closed the door behind him.

Monsieur Veelair stood bowing just inside the door. He was a tall young gentleman, who wore a long frock coat, with shoulders that were padded to high, sharp little points, an upturned moustache, and hair somewhat longer than is pleasing to the Anglo-Saxon eye. He carried his hat before him, pressed against his bosom, and he did not remove his gloves. Except that he failed to shrug the padded shoulders, and to make a little dance step when he bowed, he might have been that Frenchman who used so regularly to appear, a few years ago, in English comedies of the farcical type.

Miss Vernon stared upon her caller with an expression in which alarm gave swift place to astonishment and then to promptly concealed mirth. She cried out the young man's name—

"Why, Dane—Dane!" and went at once across the room to greet him.

"Will you believe it? For an instant I didn't recognise you—I actually didn't recognise you. The moustache and—and——" She broke off with a little laugh.

"You've turned so very, very Gallic! I'm not quite sure your mother would know you." Young Mr. Villars executed a brief echo of her laughter, but it was so poorly done that the girl saw she had embarrassed him, and that embarrassed her in turn, and made her a little hot and flushed, so that, to save the situation, she plunged into rapid talk.

"Oh, do sit down and tell me a great deal about everything! It's been such ages, hasn't it? You know, I've been in Paris fifty times since you began to live here, and each time tried to find you, but you were always away—on sketching tours, I suppose. Isn't it sketching tours that painters go on? I seem to have heard of them. I often see your mother in London, and have to explain to her just why I can't tell her how much fatter or thinner you are, and if you've developed the Dane cough, and if your studio looks well taken care of."

"Yes," said young Mr. Villars, "she would be anxious about all that. Having a painter—a species of vagabond—in the family is something rather new and uncomfortable. My mother doesn't quite know what to make of it. She hasn't yet definitely made up her mind that painting is a thing one ought to countenance."

He asked, not very curiously, about some of his former friends in London, and received the news of their engagements or marriages or successes at polo with an absence of interest that Miss Vernon found herself oddly resenting.

"It's hardly nice of Dane," she thought, and then was sorry for the thought, because she realised how he had been busy with important things while she and his other friends had frivolled. She was acutely conscious that this was not at all the Dane Villars to whom her youthful heart had gone out three years before, and the consciousness hurt her; but, as it were, she stiffened her back and frowned down that intrusive pain. She said to herself—

"Nonsense! Of course he's not the same. He was a boy then; he's a man now, doing a man's work. And I'm glad."

Aloud she said—

"Let's talk about you; never mind the rest of us. We've done nothing in three years but play. You've worked. Tell me about it. I was quite absurdly disappointed to-day, when I couldn't find anything of yours at the Grand Palais. I even looked through the catalogues—both of them—but you weren't there. Isn't it the thing to do, any more—show at the Salon?"



"Her aunt saw that she dropped her eyes."

Mr. Villars waved one hand in a fluent gesture—thumb and first two fingers outspread.

"Oh, the Salon!" he said contemptuously. "I've neither time nor inclination to bother with salons. You went there to-day? Well, you saw several miles of atrociously mishandled paint."

"I saw some good things, too," she objected. But Mr. Villars again waved that fluent, condemning gesture—thumb and first two fingers outspread.

"Oases in a desert. I've no patience with the thing. I don't want it. Can't be bothered with it. A jury composed of a herd of doddering old men, who pass each other's pupils, and throw out the work that is good enough to threaten them. A man of any individual power would asphyxiate in such an atmosphere.

"Now, I," said he, frowning—"I'm working things out in my own shop, along my own lines. No schools, no slavery to salons. I've my own idea about painting, and I'm going to win on my own hand."

He talked at some length, and very earnestly about what that idea was, and about how he was carrying it out. It seemed to Miss Vernon that he talked very well indeed, but she found it difficult to follow him, because she knew little about the technique of painting, and because Mr. Villars drew generously upon the *argot* of the studio. She struggled hard to keep up; her eye, like the eye of one hypnotised, followed the fluent circles of that gesticulating hand, and the mad illusion fastened upon her that she was a player in an orchestra, incompetent, lost, gazing with a sort of despair upon the baton that she was quite hopeless of obeying.

Out of that flow of ready speech she gathered, however, a vague but sure conviction that Dane was engaged upon great things, and she glowed with pride of him. He was, after all, the boy of three years ago, grown to manhood. His speech was strange to her, and it seemed difficult for him to express himself in English, so that he had frequent recourse to French; but, then, he had been long in France. He was more sweepingly sure of himself than most men dare to be, but he had always been rather sure about things, even as a boy; and, besides, that is a quality women find it easy to admire. Altogether, she was touched and proud and glad, and her eyes shone very brightly upon young Mr. Villars before he had finished with his idea about painting.

"You've been very good, Dane," she said, when he rose at length to go. "I can't tell you how pleased I am. It must be a great bore to you to have to explain things in words of one syllable to people who are so shockingly ignorant, but I assure you it has been worth while, because it's given me such pleasure. Do you think I might see some of your work before I leave Paris? You're not too secretive about it for that, are you?"

"Oh," said he, "I was going to say that to-morrow afternoon some people—a few friends of mine—are coming in to see my latest canvases. If you and your aunt would care to come——"

"Care to come!" she cried. "I should rather think we would! Indeed we'll come. I don't know what my aunt has on for to-morrow, but she'll just have to give it up, whatever it is. Thanks more than I can say!" She put out both her hands to him, but Mr. Villars had his hat to consider, and could manage only one. However, he pressed that one very warmly, and made his deep French bow and went away.

Somewhat later, Miss Vernon's aunt found her niece walking about the room in a state of great animation. She asked—

"Well, and what of Rembrandt Van Dyck? Did he have a velvet jacket and a waterfall tie?"

Miss Vernon gave a little laugh.

"I believe his coat was rather—farcical," said she. "Not velvet exactly, but odd. And he has a moustache, and he makes gestures, and pretends he has forgotten English, and he's very, very sure. But, d'you know, Aunt Agatha, I've an idea he's doing great things all by himself here? I believe I'm going to be immensely proud of Dane. I shall know to-morrow, anyhow, for we're going to his studio at four."

"Not I—not I," said the elder woman. "I'm going to one Paquin's at that hour, and no human influence shall prevent me. You must get another chaperon, my love."

Miss Vernon devoted herself to an instant's frowning thought.

"I think," she decided, "that I'll get Villebon. I know he is in town. I'll telephone to him. After painting portraits of three of the family, and staying with us at the Hall last year for nearly a month, he can hardly refuse to do me a small favour. Villebon is a very great painter, and he is a very sweet old soul. He'll help me to understand what Dane is doing."

The elder woman politely concealed a yawn.

"An excellent idea," said she. "And now, if I may mention so vulgar a matter,

we must dress for dinner. Berthe is making imploring faces at you from your doorway."

The girl said an absent "Yes, yes, I'll go at once," and went into her room. But there, before giving herself over to the hands of the excellent Berthe, she sat for a rather long time before her dressing-table, and frowned thoughtfully upon the photograph of a young gentleman who bore no resemblance to Mr. Dane Villars.

In the Rue Vaneau, at half-past four the next day, Miss Vernon and M. Villebon squeezed themselves into the canary-bird cage which called itself a lift, pressed the button marked "Sixième," afterwards the buttton marked "Montée," and began to mount heavenwards with a deliberate though somewhat irregular majesty.

"I am an old man," said the celebrated painter, "and my knees are no longer what they once were, but I would infinitely prefer climbing an exceeding high mountain to being incarcerated in one of these man-traps that stop between floors and leave you there to scream. I fear and abominate them!"

The lift became seized with an attack of ague, and Miss Vernon hurled herself with involuntary fervour upon her companion's breast. She withdrew the two inches which the narrow space allowed, and M. Villebon made a little bow. He said gallantly—

"I retract my words; I was too hasty." And they laughed together.

At the fifth floor the machine hesitated, trembled again, groaned as with utter fatigue, and crept exhausted the rest of the way, halting there with a gasp.

"If only I could make it understand how sorry I am!" said Miss Vernon. "I hate to see a dumb thing suffer. You push the button to make it go down again, don't you? Thanks!"

They entered a large grey-walled studio, from which most of the top light had been excluded, and part of the north light as well, so that the place was filled with a colourless, sad, and delicate glow. There was nothing hung upon the walls, but against one of them a little high table had been placed, and upon this, in a dull green vase, a single tall lily stood and seemed to shiver with loneliness. The windows and doorways were hung with ashen velvet, and upon the floor there were ashen rugs. Even the cushions of the few chairs were of the same despairing hue. Miss Vernon felt that if, by some horrible mischance, a colour had got into that bleak enclosure, it would have screamed and died, and turned promptly grey.

There were ten or twelve people seated or standing about the room when the two entered, and, at the far end of the studio, Mr. Dane Villars stood beside an easel and, with the aid of a very long-haired young man, inserted canvases, one at a time, into a gilt frame, lecturing, as it were, upon the meaning and merits of each. He broke off at once, however, and advanced to meet the two new-comers. Miss Vernon explained—

"My aunt couldn't come to-day—she was so very sorry—and so our old friend, M. Villebon, offered to take her place."

The younger man bowed over the hand of the great painter, and Miss Vernon observed that his face was flushed with embarrassment, but she did not know whether the embarrassment betokened pleasure or pain. He said—

"It is very good of you to come, M. Villebon. I'm afraid you will be thoroughly bored. Just a few things here—my own ideas. You won't like them." But the Frenchman checked him.

"On the contrary, monsieur, I am more interested in the work of the younger men than in anything else in this world. We're near our end, we old ones. Our work is done. It's you young men who have got to take our places—the painters of to-morrow. I shall like to see what you are doing."

Villars continued to hover nervously about the two, but Miss Vernon drove him away.

"Do, please, go on showing the pictures!" she begged. "That's what we came for—to see them." And so, after a few rather incoherent protests, he went back to the easel where the very long-haired young man was waiting.

Miss Vernon found a chair next to a pleasant woman in a home-made hat, but the Frenchman moved on a little beyond before taking a seat. The girl saw how the eyes of all who were there followed him, and saw heads go together in excited whisperings.

With great curiosity she glanced round her at the people who were seated or standing about the studio, and it seemed to her that Dane Villars must have very queer friends, indeed, if his visitors of that afternoon were fair samples of them. She reflected, however, that artistic people are proverbially queer, and was comforted. Then her friend began to talk, and she leant forward to look and listen.

She saw pictures take successive place in the gilt frame on the big easel—innumerable pictures—and she stared upon them with a bewilderment which resolved

itself into a vast dismay. She was quite aware of her technical ignorance of how painting is accomplished, but she was equally aware that by inherited taste, by keen interest, by study, and by opportunity, she knew good from bad. She looked upon these lean, grey, naked ladies simpering over impossible grey pools in a cardboard forest, and knew that they were bad beyond any possibility of repair—knew that there were no words for how bad they were.

It was like falling through the air from a great height—like laying hands upon someone very dear, and finding oneself at grips with a grinning monster. She was swept by an almost overpowering sense of physical sickness.

Dane Villars!

And after all her hope and pride and joy in him!

She glanced once more at the people about her, stared into their faces in a shocked search for mirth, for mockery, but the faces were masks to her—expressionless, enigmatic. She looked beyond to where M. Villebon sat upright, his eyeglass in one hand. He was frowning slightly, but it might have been a frown of interest. He told her nothing. She drew a little sigh and turned her eyes once more upon the easel at the end of the room.

The canvas of the moment represented a grey, unclad gentleman of very improbable anatomy, who stretched ape-like arms upward towards a twinkling star, while a stout lady crouching upon the ground held him with grim determination by the legs.

"The symbol!" said Mr. Dane Villars, placing thumb and second finger together before him, as if he had the thing imprisoned there.

"The symbol! Man's soul aspiring to the infinite. Bear in mind that it's the symbol which matters. The *thing* is nothing—nothing!

"Tricks of colour—calculated arrangements of line—slavish studies of muscles! What are they? I say, nothing. I despise them. Photographs! A photographer can beat you at that, now that he uses colour. The thought, the idea! If I could paint pure thought stripped of its physical envelope, I would do it gladly. Since I cannot, I use symbols of the flesh—the objects of Nature. Symbols—symbols!"

Miss Vernon closed her eyes. The sense of prodigious disappointment, of vast dismay, swept her still, like a wave of physical sickness, and she was beginning to grow a little angry—not so much with Dane Villars as with herself—with the sentimental folly which had permitted, even encouraged, this man to mean so much to her for so long. She realised for the first time how very much he had meant—how she had been, as it were, saving him up, even though for long periods he had scarcely appeared in her thoughts at all. She found herself wondering what would have come of it if Villars had remained in England. Nothing, probably. He had gone away rather romantically in the full flush of her young girl's admiration. He had been the first to her, and a girl does not forget that one. She had been saving him up all that time. He was to return to his country covered with medals and decorations, handsome, brilliant, and distinguished—the new painter. And he was to be her Dane Villars, the boy she had loved.

She became aware of voices and movement about her, and opened her eyes to find that the performance was at an end. Villars stood at the other side of the room, talking to M. Villebon, and a little group of the other guests hung about them. The pleasant lady in the home-made hat coughed gently, and Miss Vernon turned to her with as much as she could summon of a smile.

"I'm Miss Cummings," the pleasant lady said. She was a rather stout old lady, with pink cheeks and a genial smile.

"You must be a friend of Mr. Villars from home, aren't you?" she asked. And the girl said—

"Yes, Dane and I grew up together in England, but I haven't seen him for three years." She asked—

"Do you live here in Paris?" And Miss Cummings answered—

"Oh, yes, I've lived here for nine years now! I have a little apartment in the Rue Bara, not far from the Gardens.

"I like it," she said, nodding cheerily. "There's so much more going on than there was in Syracuse. There's something all the time.

"And I always did dote on art. That's why I came here first, and I guess that's why I've stayed. I couldn't make up my mind to go back to Syracuse. No, I couldn't do that."

"Then," Miss Vernon questioned, "you keep up with the work that is being done here, don't you? I envy you that. You follow the new movements."

The pleasant old lady cocked her head a little reflectively, like a genial elderly bird.



"She saw pictures take successive place in the gilt frame on the big easel."

"Oh, I see what's being done. They ask me to their studios because I'm one of the colony here, and I always go, but I don't pretend to understand it all, my dear. I was a great admirer of Bouguereau. It seems to me very sad that he had to die. These younger men—— Well, now, your friend, Mr. Villars—I suppose his pictures are very fine and intellectual, aren't they, even if the jury won't let them into the Salon? But, bless you, I don't understand 'em! I guess I'm a mite too old to take up with these new ways. I liked Bouguereau."

Miss Vernon stared at her for an instant.

"Are you quite sure about the Salon?" she asked. "I had an idea that Dane didn't send there." But the genial lady from Syracuse nodded.

"Oh, yes, he sends. I know, because Mlle. Korsakoff—the one across the room without a hat; they say Mr. Villars is engaged to her—she told me so. She was angry about it. She said the jury was a pack of idiots, and I don't know but what that's so. I've heard it from so many of the students."

Miss Vernon said in a low tone—

"Oh! Engaged? Really?" And her eyes sought out the one woman in the studio who was without her hat—a tall Russian girl, with a flat figure and oddly-dressed hair, and a broad peasant face that had, nevertheless, a certain beauty. Behind Miss Vernon the other lady prattled on.

"She educated herself, they say, and she's frightfully clever. I think she's going to be famous some day. Did you see her picture in the Salon? Everybody's talking about it—a starved Russian peasant woman who has gone mad and is eating her baby out in the snow."

"Yes," said Miss Vernon, in an inattentive tone—"yes, I saw it." The lady from Syracuse was silent for a little space, and in that interval Miss Vernon caught a fragment of conversation from the group round the easel across the room. She heard M. Villebon say—

"Now, what always interests me most in a man's work is his method in going about it. The result speaks for itself. I like to see the means. Might I, for example, see the studies from which you built up this canvas on the easel?" Then she heard Dane Villars.

"Studies," he asked rather blankly—"studies? Oh, yes, to be sure—studies! I don't make them. Yes, of course it's customary in old-fashioned painting. I'm not academic. I've put away all the old academic fetiches—struck out for myself. The symbol! I paint what I see in my mind, not what's physically about me. That I leave to the school men—the old-timers."

Miss Vernon rose suddenly and turned to the two long windows which stood open behind her. She saw that they gave upon a balcony, and so stepped out between the velvet hangings into the fresh air. Her head ached a little, and she felt tired. She leant her arms upon the iron rail of the balcony, and stared across the roofs of Paris to the far heights of Montmartre, where the Sacré Cœur sat like a white jewel.

She heard a step and looked round. M. Villebon came out through the long window to join her. His eyes swept the immense semicircle before him, and he exclaimed over it.

"What a magnificent view! I had no idea one commanded such a panorama from here. What colour! Fancy what the sunset skies must be from this balcony—the Sacré Cœur when the evening haze begins to darken!

"I think," smiled the great Frenchman—"I think that, if I lived here, I should spend the whole of every day out on this mountain-top, trying to paint what I saw."

"Yes," said the girl absently—"yes, so should I." She drew a quick breath and nodded her head towards the open window.

"Is that," she began—"is that in there as bad as it seems to me? Is it?" M. Villebon's face became expressionless and he looked away; but the girl gave a low exclamation, which must have betrayed a little of what she felt, for the old man's eyes turned back to her again and remained there, kindly, curious, a little compassionate.

"I must know," she said. "I'm afraid you must let me beg you to tell me the exact truth. I've got to know. Don't be afraid of hurting me! Please tell me the truth. Are those pictures as bad as I think they are?"

"My dear child," said the great painter, "Mr. Villars's pictures are worse than you could possibly think they are." His face flushed suddenly as if at a fresh remembrance of how his beloved art had been insulted within the past hour.

"They are," said he, "too bad even to be worth discussing—bad beyond repair or hope—and the worst of it is that they will be followed by others just as bad, if not worse, for they are not born out of humility and toil

and painstaking observation and heart's blood, as works of art should be born. They come forth from an egotism so shallow and so barren that it sneers at the very beauties God has placed in this world as too uninteresting to be worthy of study.

"Symbols!" he exclaimed impatiently. "Symbols! Is it possible that this young man believes himself fitted to teach men by painting symbols? What has fitted him for that? Where has he learnt the wisdom that is to show us truths we have not known? Does he think that he has grown wise by shirking the labour that we others have cheerfully undertaken? Does he think he has learnt high secrets by shutting his eyes to beauty? Does he think he has become strong by refusing to profit by the example of stronger men than he?"

The Frenchman came a step nearer to where Miss Vernon stood watching him, her hands clasped before her, her face grave.

"That young man yonder," said he very earnestly, "is a sign of these degenerate days, in which Art, once strong and glorious and full of vigour, has grown ill, unwholesome, has turned to strange vices—the search for the new sensation. It would have been immeasurably better if he had remained at home. He is a weakling. He had a little graceful talent when he came here. He has just shown me studies made at that time, and they offer promise. At the worst they are sincere; they are earnest efforts to see and reproduce. But he was a weakling. When he found that success lay far above, upon distant and toilsome heights, he had not the courage to climb towards it. There was in him none of the true fire, none of the humility that makes men great. He wanted success without effort, without waiting. He looked about him and saw little-souled and impudent pretenders—men like himself, without the patience to wait—who had set up as priests of new cults. He saw that each of these had round him a circle of feebler weaklings still—apes, imitators, extollers. He saw that, to possess a little brief notoriety, you need only to sneer in a sufficiently loud voice at that which is good and true, to offer in its place something that flashes and is bizarre. The chase of the new sensation! It is the disease of our anæmic times.

"So your friend made for himself a new formula and called it Art, and instantly a little group gathered round him with open eyes and mouths. You have seen them here. You see what they are. Do you envy the man who is their centre?"

M. Villebon drew a little sigh and shook his head sadly.

"There are too many like your friend yonder. It breaks my heart to see them. Do not misunderstand me. Don't think I am forgetting the men and women—a long and honourable line of them—who have come to us, through many years, from your country, who have studied in our schools, learnt our traditions, taught us something in turn, and then have gone back to England to paint pictures and decorate public buildings. I do not forget those. I rejoice in them. Among them are great artists. But I think of the weaklings among the strong. I think of those who come to us year by year, full of hope, and sometimes of talent, but who have not the courage to work and wait. I wish I might warn that eager little army that is marching upon us away from its safe and comfortable home. I wish I might make it listen to me. I should say to it—

"'Are you humble to learn? Are you strong to toil? Are you patient to endure? Is your heart pure? Is your eye single? Does there burn within you a flame that neither hardship nor temptation, neither hope deferred nor a sick heart can extinguish?' Then I should say: 'Come to us, for it is out of this stuff that the true artist is made. But if you have not courage, if your eye wanders towards the false and the easy, if toil looks long and hard to you, if you find yourselves envying those who have won a cheap success, remain in your own country. Paris is too full of poisonous opportunity for you; you will find ruin here.'"

He broke off suddenly, with a little embarrassed laugh.

"I seem," said M. Villebon lightly, "to have been making a little sermon. Mademoiselle, I demand ten thousand pardons! An old man raves. Forgive him, you who are young and beautiful and kind."

The girl shook a grave head.

"There's nothing to forgive," said she, "but much to be grateful for. You have helped me to understand. Thank you. As for Dane Villars, I'm afraid——" She broke off, looking beyond him, and the Frenchman turned his head.

"He is coming out here," said Miss Vernon in a low voice. "Would you mind leaving me with him for a moment? I'll rejoin you almost at once, and then we can go." The great painter bowed and turned

away back into the studio, passing his host, on the way, with a pleasant word about the view.

Villars came quickly to where Miss Vernon stood waiting. His face was a little flushed. He jerked his head backward to where the other man had disappeared.

"Well?" he demanded. "Well? What did Villebon say? I couldn't get much out of him—close-mouthed beggar. What did he say to you?"

The truth was impossible—out of the question. Miss Vernon found her lips moving glibly in the more or less intelligent platitudes in which people, at such times, take refuge. She was conscious of a sudden desperate longing to get away.

"Oh, well!" the man said, obvious chagrin in his eyes. "Oh, well! Villebon! What could one expect? He's as blindly academic as the worst of them. One wouldn't expect him to understand anything new."

The girl was upon the abrupt edge of an explosion just then. Such utter fatuousness was hardly to be borne. But she held her tongue. A swift resurgence of that old tender wave swept her. After all, the boy was Dane Villars, and she had loved him, in a young girl's fashion.

She began to wonder if this incredible attitude of his might not cover something she had not seen. Could it be a kind of bravado? Could it be possible that he knew a little of the truth—was frightened, and blustered to hide his fear?

She put out one hand and touched him.

"When are you coming home?" she asked very gently. "When are you coming back to England? We shall be glad of you, you know. I'm speaking for your family and your friends now—all of us. We don't insist that you should wait until you can come with flags and a band. We shall be glad of you—just you yourself. Even if you'd failed utterly, we should be glad of you. We should welcome you home. You know that, don't you, Dane?"

She held him with her hand, but Dane Villars stared at her with quite evident amazement.

"Home!" he cried. "England! Me! Oh, of course, I expect to run over there now and then, when I've a chance. I should—well, like to see the people again, and all that, though I hardly think I shall ever care to live in England. But, bless you, I can't go now; I'm far too busy. And, besides"—he flushed slightly and made a brief awkward sound of laughter—"besides, just at present, there's another reason."

Miss Vernon managed a little laugh to answer his, and, after it, drew a long breath.

"Ah, it's true, then," she asked—"I mean about your engagement? Somebody told me."

"Well," Villars said—"well, I suppose—yes, I think we might call it true, though I've said nothing about it yet to anyone, not even to my mother. You met her inside there, of course? Have you seen any of her work? Very strong. Faults, of course. It has faults, but we shall remedy those. I tell her——"

Miss Vernon moved towards the window.

"I've stayed too long," she said. "Monsieur Villebon will be impatient. All my best wishes, Dane—all of them! You two must be very congenial, and I hope you'll be very happy. Good-bye! No, don't bother—I'll find my way. Here's Monsieur Villebon to make his adieux. Good-bye!"

Down in the street she leant back wearily in the taxi-cab and closed her eyes. After a little while she said—

"That poor boy! Poor Dane! What will become of him, I wonder?"

"I feel," she said, "as if I had been looking on at a shipwreck. . . . Oh, it's not the pictures! The pictures don't mean very much to me. If I had found him here, working sincerely, trying to learn, making an honest failure of it, I shouldn't mind about the failure, though I was ambitious for him once. It isn't the bad pictures; it's—the bigger failure. It's Dane himself!

"You know, when I was a child, I—he was a great deal to me. I had such dreams of him—such high hopes!

"Well, that is finished!" She gave an abrupt laugh which had a sound of scorn, but it seemed to the elderly Frenchman beside her that the scorn was directed inward. He felt an inexplicable impression that the girl was laughing at herself.

Then she was silent for a long time, but in the Rue de Bourgogne she said—

"I want to stop at a post-office, if we pass one, to send a telegram."

Villebon looked at her and saw that her cheeks were pink.

"There is a friend of mine," she explained, "on board a P. and O. liner which should reach Tilbury some time to-night."

The Frenchman made a little exclamation under his breath, as if he began to understand, and his kind old eyes twinkled.

"Tilbury," said he, "is only nine hours from Paris, I believe."

"Eight," corrected the girl beside him—"eight. That's what I want to say in my telegram."

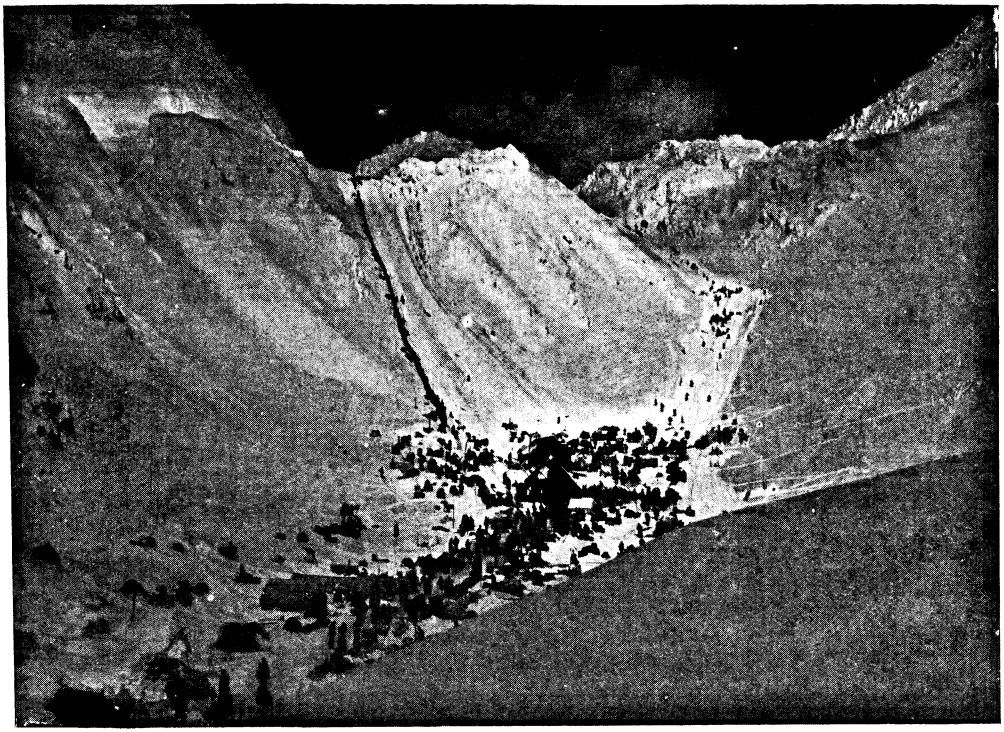


Photo by] [*Larss & Duclos, Dawson.*

THE SCALES AND SUMMIT OF CHILKOOT PASS IN 1898.

THE KLONDIKE—YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY.

BY TRUMBULL WHITE.

FROM bonanza mining camp to colonial capital in a single decade is the stride that Dawson—no longer Dawson City—has made, and Dawson is the embodiment of the Klondike. From tents to Queen Anne cottages, from trails to pavements, from dance halls and riotous living to an organised society of grace and refinement, from "easy money" and wastefulness to the orderly and careful business methods that great interests require—these are but the simplest details of the change.

Let us not call it "regeneration," but only "change," for the years are brief, and there are still men in Dawson who have been leaders in both *régimes*. They still feel the glamour of that so-near past, with a certain tenderness for the days when there was no restraint on anything short of robbery and murder.

It is all very different now. The things that are spectacular to-day are the building of a city, the construction of great hydraulic plants, the moving of mountains by the application of modern mining methods, rather than those more glittering, more theatrical incidents of the bonanza period. From a serious point of view, and to the eye of imagination, the present is quite as picturesque as the past, and quite as significant.

And how did it all come about—this finding of a veritable national treasury of virgin gold in the far north-west, and the ultimate building of a city where wilderness was king? It is a story of adventure, courage, perseverance, foresight, and accomplishment well worth recalling to memories more apt to preserve another set of facts—the madness of the stampede, the wild disorder of the new camp, and the fortunes that were gained and spent in a day.

Familiar as is the name Klondike to everyone, even now there is a wide confusion as to just where and what it is. A small and

inconsequential river in Canadian territory, flowing into the Yukon from the east, and by no means a gold-laden stream, its entire course outside Alaska, and nearly two thousand miles from the glittering beach sands of Nome, on Bering Sea, it has been made a modern synonym for Pactolus, while many still think of it, first, as situated in Alaska, a territory of the United States, and, second, as a general term for all the scattered Eldorados of the Arctic.

Officially, Klondike is the name of nothing but this river, neither town nor district, nor even mine or mining camp. The town is Dawson, the territory is the Yukon, and Klondike remains memorable only because it came to be the popular word for the golden land of the far north.

Geographically speaking, the region ruled from the capital on the Klondike river is a vast triangle extending from British Columbia on the south as its base to the Arctic Ocean on the north as an apex, Alaska forming its perpendicular on the west, and the summits of the Rocky Mountains its hypothenuse on the north-east. Cutting across this triangle from south-east to north-west, roughly parallel with the hypothenuse, flow the waters of the mighty Yukon, on its course to the Bering Sea *viâ* the great Alaskan curve.

Not far from where the Yukon leaves Canadian jurisdiction to enter American, the Klondike river comes down from the eastern hills to enter the larger stream, and there, in the forks of the rivers, has grown the town of Dawson.

Even thus early in its course, with 1,500 miles yet to flow before reaching salt water, the Yukon is a noble stream; but the Klondike, entering from the east bank, is far from impressive, except as one's imagination contributes embellishments and memories from the bonanza days. Back in the hills and mountains, working down every gully towards an outlet in the great river, is the labyrinth of little creeks with famous names—Bonanza, Eldorado, Hunker, Dominion, Sulphur, Gold Bottom, Gold Run, and the rest, some flowing first into the Klondike, and some reaching the Yukon directly or by

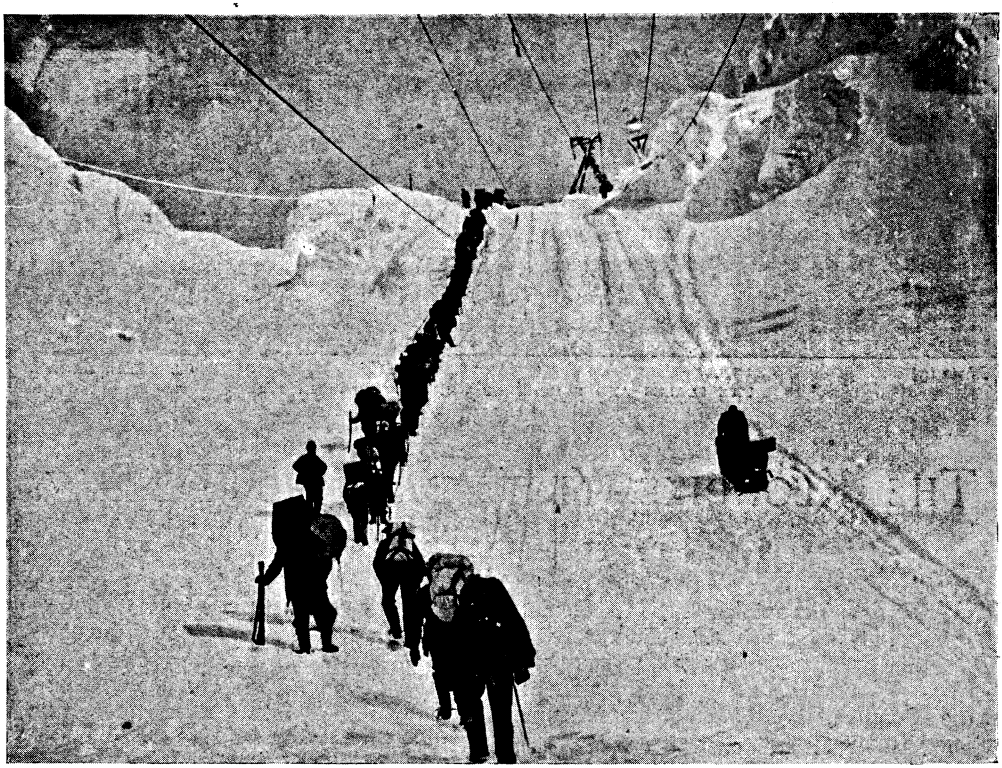


Photo by Hegg, [*published by Larss & Duclos, Dawson.*

THE LAST CLIMB TO THE SUMMIT OF CHILKOOT PASS, 1898.

other streams. These were the creeks of the golden sands. To them struggled countless thousands of adventurers from all over the world during the stampede that followed the first discoveries on Bonanza, and to the general reader they make up the Klondike of history.

This was no chance finding of gold by pioneers of some other occupation, such as that in California nearly fifty years before. Prospectors had been working along the creeks and rivers tributary to the Yukon, on both sides of the international boundary, for several years and with varying success. Chilkoot Pass was an established thoroughfare for explorers and prospectors for fifteen years before the stampedes of 1897 and 1898 made it famous. At least a thousand miners were panning out placer gold from the gravel bars of Cassiar, Franklin Creek, Fortymile, Rampart, and Birch Creek, at the time of the Klondike discovery. A post of the Canadian Royal North-West Mounted Police was established at Fortymile a year before that eventful August day on Bonanza Creek, to fix a centre of law and order for the mining population of the region. During the summer of 1896 many wandering prospectors, hunters, and adventurers of the north were scattered about in the creek valleys up and down the Yukon.

It is a fresh evidence of the uncertain value of tradition as an authority for history that an event as recent and as significant as the discovery of Klondike gold should still be in dispute.

In the popular account of the affair, George Washington Carmack—or, rather, his Indian wife, while he was taking a nap—figures as the discoverer of the rich placers on Bonanza Creek. He it was, at any rate, who staked "Discovery Claim," named the creek, and recorded according to law. Tagish Charlie and Skookum Jim, his Indian brothers-in-law, staked the claims next above and below him on the stream.

It appears, however, that many of the old-time settlers, and of the Canadian officials, credit the actual discovery to Robert D. Henderson, an old prospector in the region, who had panned out gold on that creek, and gave Carmack the "tip" that took him



Photo by Hegg,] *[published by Larss & Duclos, Dawson.*

THE SUMMIT, CHILKOOT PASS: THE BOUNDARY LINE IN 1898.

there. Even this is challenged by Tagish Charlie, who claims to have made a big strike and revealed it to his white relative.

The word of the marvellous wealth in Bonanza gravel went forth, and as fast as men could travel from the scattered camps of the vicinity, they gathered to share it. The short open season was nearing an end, so not much work could be accomplished that year. Nor could the news of the discovery reach the outer world soon enough or in such detail as to start an instant stampede to the north.

Then came the tale of the perils and the rigours of the journey. There were the rotten ships brought into grasping service for the voyage up the Pacific coast to Skagway and other ports. Whole fleets of them were no better than floating coffins with rusty tea-kettles for boilers and sewing machines for engines. It was an ominous voyage at best in those days, with light-houses and charts too few, with drunken captains and inefficient engineers too many.

Next we heard of the congested, dangerous landing in the sodden tide-flats of Skagway

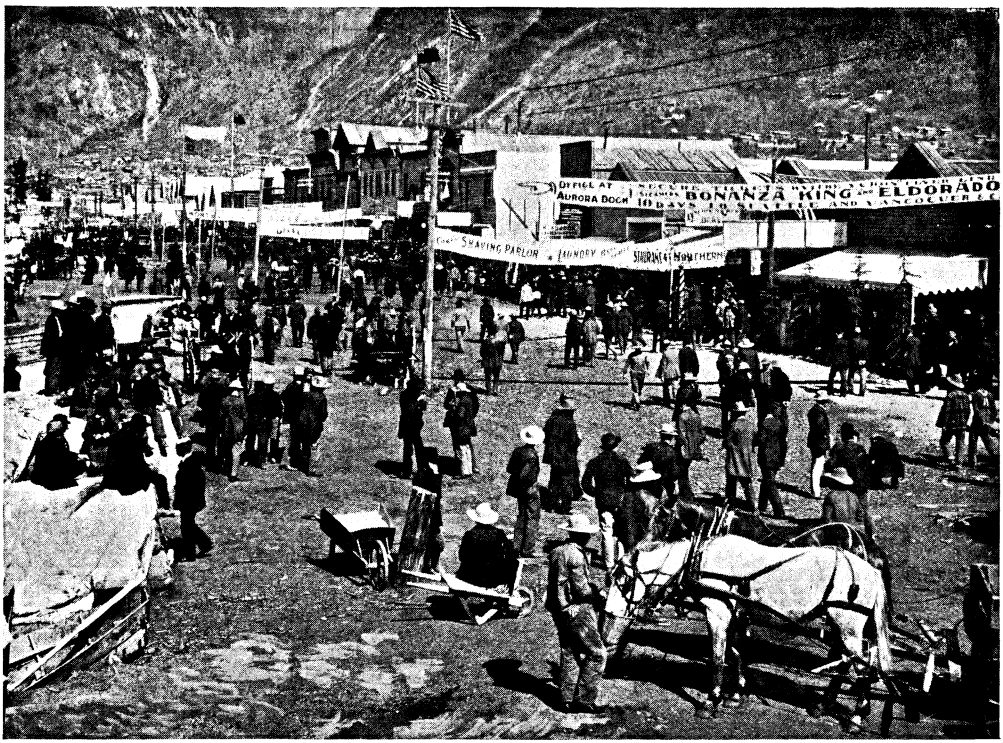


Photo by] [*Larss & Duclos, Dawson.*

STREET SCENE, DAWSON CITY, JULY 1899.

By the time the spring of 1897 was open, however, the madness had spread all over the world, and Argonauts from everywhere were on the way. The two years that followed—1897 and 1898—sounded the clamour that remains in the memory of most of us as the true note of the Klondike.

In the outer world we heard flying rumours of fortunes for all in a few yards of gravel, of men made rich in a day, of long-lost prodigal sons returning from the unknown north with gold wherewith to excuse all their wastrel days of youth.

and Dyea; the knavery of the harpies and the thugs who infested ports and trail; the exactions of packers, Indian and white, who throve upon the needs of the "tenderfoot"; and the unspeakable difficulties of the White Pass and the Chilkoot Pass, over which two weary multitudes were climbing, each man wishing he had chosen the other route.

At last the summit, ice cliffs and avalanches all surmounted, a few comrades left behind along the way. Then the descent to lake levels and the northward-flowing waters of the Yukon.

All downstream now, no more work or danger! And with such high hopes another crazy fleet was launched, the most amazing craft that ever sailed, and manned by boatmen who knew neither bow nor stern, sail nor oar, wind nor wave. So they ran the new dangers of Lake Bennett and Windy Arm, of Tagish and Marsh and Laberge, storms and canyons and rapids claiming always their toll of life and outfit.

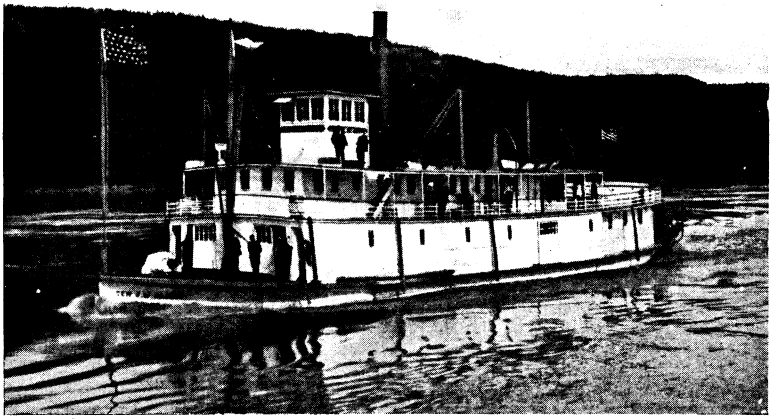


Photo by] [*Trumbull White.*

A PASSENGER BOAT ON THE YUKON.

By this time it was a race, with fortunes for prizes. Even the rapids were welcomed, as they hurried the voyagers the faster down the Yukon. And when the tents of Dawson City swung into sight against the great "slide" as a background, make no doubt that everyone thought the prize was in his grasp. This was the poor man's camp, with gold enough for all, and easy of getting.

While this greater number of gold-seekers chose the shortest way to the Klondike, there were alternative routes exploited for profit or patriotism. Canadians undertook to urge an "All-Canadian" route to these new Canadian goldfields, and various attempts were made to meet this demand and to avoid the short crossing of the American littoral by the White Pass or the Chilkoot Pass. The best of these was bad enough, and the worst took the lives of those who hazarded it at the rate of some fifty per cent. Some even attempted the tremendous circuit by way of the Mackenzie River and the Peel, and spent two years in the task.

Americans likewise wanted an "All-American" route, and numbers of them landed at Valdez, crossed the glaciers, and made a toilsome journey north-east to their destination. The Yukon river itself became one of the highways, with steamboats inadequate to the demand, leaving hundreds stranded along the course of the river between Bering Sea and Dawson.

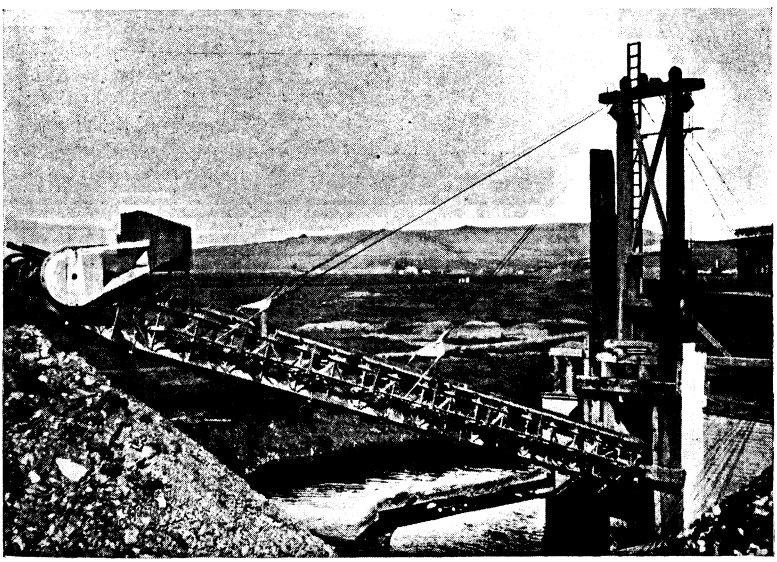


Photo by] [*Trumbull White.*

THE GREAT MODERN DREDGERS AT WORK.

Now the contrast. It came gradually, but conditions reached safety, comfort, and luxury perhaps more rapidly than

has ever before been true in such a remote and isolated land of pioneering. There was money enough to pay for betterment, there were numbers enough to justify it, and the energy and foresight of Canadians and Americans alike were enlisted.

First, the journey. To-day there are sailings several times a week between Seattle or Vancouver and Skagway over a route charted, lighted, and picturesque, the steamers modern passenger liners with all that this implies—safe, swift, and luxurious. Lines are in service under both Canadian and American flags, and the day of unsafe ships incompetently officered is quite gone. Silverware and linen, orchestras and deck sports, saloon concerts and the captain's dinner, make the voyage seem perfectly natural to trans-oceanic travellers. Except for the wonderful scenery of the "inside passage," and the shipmates whose memories and stories are of the days of the stampede, this part of the voyage to the Klondike might be in any of the seven seas.

Skagway of to-day is a modern port of transhipment, with great docks, paved streets, modern shops, and hotels, and, for the present purpose, most significant of all, a railway station. Here, where toiling thousands began their weary, dangerous march by way of the White Pass, is the beginning of a modern railway—the White Pass and Yukon—from tide-water to the Yukon. Up the precipitous slopes it climbs as did the procession of gold-seekers only a decade ago, clinging to the canyon walls, spanning chasms by cantilever trails, and surmounting the summit in hours instead of days. Then, after a pause at the boundary, where one passes under the red of another flag, begins the long slide downhill to the head of navigation for steamers at White Horse, over the ranges and in the current of Yukon waters.

The tide-flats and the avalanches, the old haunts of "Soapy Smith's Gang" along the trail, the White Pass and the summit, Bennett and Windy Arm, Tagish and Marsh, Miles Canyon and the White Horse Rapids, one has passed them all in seven hours, with a luncheon station and white-aproned waitresses at noon-time.

In the olden time, which means anything more than ten years ago in the Klondike country, travellers paused at White Horse, to take stock of lives and outfits after the perils of the rapids, before re-embarking for the long run to Dawson. So now, with the protesting clamour of the frustrated torrent echoing from the right, the train halts at the camp that has become a town, and the traveller may take his choice of hotels or go aboard a waiting river steamer.



Photo by] [*Trumbull White.*

AT WORK ON THE SLUICES.

These newer steamboats forming the fleet in service on the upper Yukon, between Dawson and White Horse, are light-draught, flat-bottom, stern-wheel, wood-burning craft, with no hold for cargo, but ample space for freight on the main deck, which is also the deck where engines and boilers are installed. Above are commodious state-rooms, saloons, smoking-rooms, promenades, and all the accommodation of space that one could wish. They are well and generously administered as to table and room service, with electric lights, bath-rooms, and hot and cold running water as details of comfort. These steamers make the voyage downstream from White Horse to Dawson, some five hundred miles, in two days, requiring twice as long for the up-stream return journey.

And thus the Argonaut of to-day may travel from Vancouver or Seattle to the Klondike in six or seven days, electric lighted all the way, and always in reach of every comfort of modern travel. Even if the allurement of a longer journey to the same destination leads him to choose the route by way of Bering Sea, and up the lower Yukon river through Alaska, he finds real ocean steamers

of quality for the voyage, *viâ* Nome to St Michael, at the mouth of the mighty river, and then even larger boats of the White Horse type in regular service all the long way to Dawson in similar comfort.

We have got our gold-seekers to the golden north by these contrasting ways, in the days just after the discovery and in the present. What find they then and now when they enter the land of promised wealth?

In the days of the tented city, boats for a mile along the river front, wedged together tightly and extending several rows into the stream, after the fashion of a crowded Chinese port. Then countless canvas-roofed shanties and tents, showing white in the sunshine, guy ropes interwoven, even streets occupied, so rapid was the influx of population. More than sixty thousand persons entered Dawson during the spring and summer of 1898—the big year—and even though they scattered to the creeks as fast as possible, there were sometimes twenty-five thousand gathered in and around the town.



Photo by] [*Trumbull White.*

INTERRUPTED BY THE CAMERA.

Crimes of violence were infrequent, for Dawson never was a "bad" camp in the sense of murder and robbery, thanks to the generally wholesome character of the population, and the wise and efficient administration of the mounted police. But everything was lawless, unrestrained. Gambling, drunkenness, dance halls, and debauchery held sway unchecked. Miners who found nuggets in every pan of gravel threw them away on cards, wine, and riotous living generally, as if such "easy money" was to last for ever.

The far north contributed unique conditions of its own. In the long summer season, with practically no darkness, placer mining and all sorts of work went on at a hard pace, day and night, taking advantage of open weather and daylight. The streets were as busy at midnight as at midday; people went to bed only when driven by exhaustion. And then, when the season changed, with the advent of winter and the long nights, when mining ceased, when music and bright lights and warm houses held new charm, that was the time when the fortunes gained by a summer's toil were dissipated in a night's rioting.

Partly to the innate thrift and intelligence of the class of men who gradually dominated the Klondike region, partly to the wisdom of the Canadian Government, partly to the energy and foresight of capitalists who entered the field, we should credit the steadying down of Dawson into the community it is to-day.

Men came to realise the utter folly of wasting the earnings of such labour, and the camp sobered from its madness of discovery days. The Government exhausted many of the miners by imposing what seemed inordinately heavy duties on the gold output, but vindicated its action by maintaining law and order, building roads and telegraphic lines, and establishing a capable territorial administration out of the tax collected. The capitalists, realising that this was no transient condition, but the opening of a new land, rich first in gold, and afterwards in furs and forests, in coal and copper, even in agricultural possibilities, came forward for the building of the railway from tide-water to the Yukon, the construction of a fleet of modern river steamers, and all the great physical improvements that characterise Dawson and the surrounding region.

When one turns from the town itself to the gold-mining industry upon which it was founded, one comes to the most spectacular

contrast of all—the methods of the past and of the present.

It would be easy to be technical in discussing this phase of the subject, but, even at the expense of absolute precision of expression, let us tell the story in a non-scientific way.

Dawson was indeed a "poor man's camp" once it was reached. The country was vast and unsettled, the creeks were accessible, the placers were shallow. Men who entered the region with no capital, except strength and simple outfits, made fortunes in a season—some of them. The most primitive methods were profitable in such gravel, and except for the fact that the frozen ground had to be thawed before sluicing, there was no special novelty in the situation. Brush fires, hot water, steam, and sunshine were all variously employed for thawing, and the heaps of "tailings" grew as the gold output increased. Wages were high, prosperity abounded.

Observe the record of gold production in Yukon territory for a few selected years—

	DOLLARS.
1896	300,000
1897	2,500,000
1898	10,000,000
1899	16,000,000
1900	22,275,000
1901	18,000,000
1903	12,250,000
1905	7,162,438
1907	2,896,173

This tells the story of the "easy money" days, and of their passing. The cream had been skimmed, the placers were worked out, population was reducing. We had seen the rise and fall of the Klondike. Such was the common judgment.

But even then the greatest change of all had begun. Far-sighted men of wealth had considered the situation and concluded that the Klondike had not given up its gold. They knew of the crude and wasteful methods of mining that had been practised, of the shortage of water-supply for exhaustive operations, of the inadequate arrangements for thawing ground on a large scale, of the expensive production of power for operating machinery in small and isolated plants. They knew how many claims had been abandoned because they did not prove quite up to the bonanza standards of the miners who owned them, and how many others had been half worked and half neglected.

Quietly they began to plan for a great renewal of activity in the region, to take out the gold that had been left behind. Through several seasons they were quietly buying up abandoned and neglected claims, not rich enough to hold their owners' attention, claims too high above the creek level to be worked profitably, claims that had been worked over and worn out. Finally, they had so connected the apparently random and scattered purchases and options that they controlled a body of holdings comprising practically the whole of Bonanza and Eldorado Creeks—the Klondike as the world knew it.

How much money had been spent by this organisation before any return was earned, is hard to determine. The best estimates indicate that at least 20,000,000 dollars were invested in the purchase of claims and the construction of the various operating plants before an ounce of gold was taken from the gravel.

The largest single item was the providing of a permanent sufficient water-supply for all operations. To accomplish this, a considerable stream, Twelve Mile river, was diverted from its natural course and carried seventy miles by pipe and ditch and inverted syphon to the place where it was needed. Over mountain-tops, across frozen morasses, through ravines and valleys, and finally by a great bridge across the Klondike river itself, this man-made river flows.

Near the same source of supply another river was tapped and a water power created, beside which now stands the most modern of electrical power plants, remote in the mountains but perfect in every detail, sending its currents to the distant valleys of the Klondike to provide light and force for every need.

These two tremendous plants available, the whole face of Nature along the creeks is to be changed. Great dredges are at work, scraping the surface of the earth down to bedrock, mile after mile, and sluicing out the gold. Gangs of men are working ahead of the dredges, thawing out the ground with batteries of boilers and hollow steel drills injecting superheated steam deep into the vitals of the earth. The hillsides are being denuded and crumbling into the creek beds below under the force of high-pressure hydraulic attack from hose and nozzles of the heaviest design, only to be hoisted again into sluice-boxes by the newest of electric elevators. Ranges of hills are shifting back and forth from one side of the creek valleys to the other; the old heaps of tailings are again rolling through the sluices; the Klondike is being worked over again.

When one considers the remoteness of the region, the difficulties of climate and physical conditions imposed by Nature, the tremendous yield of gold already produced, and the huge investment required before any return could be assured, or even a very wide range of convincing experiments made, it seems fair to place this enterprise well at the top in the scale of commercial courage. The detailed story of the Yukon Gold Company, and the group of young men who have planned and executed its operations in the Klondike, is a human document of surpassing interest, worthy of far greater space than can be given here.

And the result? From the moment of first partial operation of the new system, the output of gold from the district once more began to mount. An increase of 400,000 dollars in production the first year of even partial operation, 1908, and apparently of 1,000,000 dollars the second year, for which the figures are not yet complete, indicates the tendency.

Of course, this does not mean that one company has a monopoly of the whole of the Klondike. There are other creeks and other districts, and even near Dawson mining continues profitably on a smaller scale by many of the original owners. But the pioneering has been done, the experiment has been made, and other developments along the same lines, in other parts of the region, may fairly be expected from other capitalists. Indeed, several dredges other than those indicated are already operating with similar success.

This seems like conservation of natural resources in the highest sense of the phrase—that phrase so stirring nowadays among thinking people. Into a mining district that had passed its prime, and was rapidly failing, came a fortunate combination of courage, capital, and skill. Thousands of men were given employment where labour was in its most depressed condition; millions of dollars were paid out in wages; other millions were paid for mining claims whose owners thought them all but exhausted; the breath of new life was breathed into a city that seemed to be passing; and the outcome is the saving of millions in gold that had been abandoned as inaccessible, or wasted by the crudity of former mining methods.

It is true that a great corporation is to reap huge profit in the end; it is true that there are a thousand wage-earners instead of a thousand small miners working their own claims, some winning, some losing. But the old days of the "poor man's camp" had already passed in the Klondike.

And the City of Dawson? It has crystallised with the passing of the decade. A territorial governor and legislative council for the Yukon, an official residence and official society, a government building of offices for administration and legislation, electric lighting, waterworks, free schools, modern churches, hospitals, a Carnegie library, stone and brick and cement buildings, good hotels, the Zero Club, the Arctic Brotherhood, and the various fraternal orders—very settled and civilised it all sounds, and so it is.

No longer do the people of the Klondike talk only of gold. They show one the wealth in other natural resources—forests, furs, agriculture, coal, and copper, the charm of the summer climate and the unique pleasures of the long winter in a northern capital. They point with proper pride to the city they have built, clean, sanitary, comfortable, law-abiding, social, and safe.

You wonder how they escape the threat of fire among so many wooden houses in the long winter of extreme cold. They show you a fire department far more complete and ample than in most cities of much greater population. During the winter season all water pumped into the city mains passes through a great steam heater, the temperature being raised to forty degrees above freezing at the farthest point of delivery, with circulation constantly maintained. Around every hydrant is fitted an electric heater, with the result that frozen hydrants are quite unknown.

And if you wonder how they endure the long winter, they can make it very clear that winter is the time of social gaiety, far beyond that of the busy summer. In summer they have their outings, their picnics, their wild flowers, their white dresses, and the ordinary pleasures of any town anywhere. But in winter—then the snow-shoeing, the skis, the coasting, the dog sleds, the dances, the real sport of the year. With houses properly built and heated, with themselves properly fed and clad, the temperature of sixty degrees below zero has no terrors for them.

So they will assure you of a welcome from the north at any season, and once there you will find them quite as proud of the civilisation they have built in hailing distance of the Arctic as they are of their golden history.

Your true pioneer, your true prospector, is in reality a poet, in that he has imagination and a vision of things to be. So it is not strange that the Klondike has produced a poet who sings of the Yukon, the gold, the snows, and the men. The people of Dawson are proud of him, their neighbour, likewise. To him let us leave the voicing of the final contrast, the Dawson of to-day in comparison with its earliest phase, which he has also vividly described. For an anniversary issue of a daily paper in the northern capital, some time ago, Robert W. Service wrote stanzas from which these graphic lines reveal the picture of to-day. We are enabled to quote them by kind permission of Mr. Fisher Unwin, the English publisher of Mr. Service's remarkable volumes of verse—

DAWSON.

There on the flat of the Yukon, ringed by inviolate snows,
Care free and comely to look on, gold-born the city arose.
City of homes and hearth-fires the heart of the Northman knows,
City the sun rejoices, skies of midnight aglow,
Babble of childish voices, gardens where poppies blow,
Cabins with curtained windows, snugly nestling low.
Yea, though the stress be over, the land hath its treasure still;
Dream of it, world-wide rover, the old town under the hill;
Blue at its feet the river, skies opalescent above,
Homes and gardens and children, peace and plenty and love.

IT IS THE WILD WOOD CHERRY.

IT is the wild wood cherry tree!
She in the heather waits,
Stretching out her tawny arms
Toward the eastern gates.
Every year, come glad April,
Her blossoms strew the slope o' the hill,
My heart with joy to fill!

It is the little cherry tree!
She in the heather stands,
Holding out white lustre-cups,
Dew-brimming in her hands.
She drinks of gorse and heather wine,
She's kissed by moon and starry shine,
And her love-songs they are mine!

It is the wild wood cherry tree!
Her life and mine are one!
Lovers of bird and honey bee,
And sweethearts of the sun.
Merry her snow-white blossoms blow,
As the breeze it rocks her to and fro,
And merry is her heart, I know!

ALICE E. GILLINGTON.

THE MASSEUSE.

By AUSTIN PHILIPS.

ALTHOUGH she had lived for nine-tenths of her life in a fashionable suburb, and had been born, if not to the purple, at least to the Harris tweed, she was competent to the tips of her strong and sensitive hands. And, these three years, she had been happy, with the rare happiness which comes only to those who love and get on unremittingly with their job.

Now it was all over. In one short hour all that she had compassed was undone. Happiness was gone; nothing could bring it back. She had entered the boarding-house with an easy, careless heart. She had met there the horror which had driven her from London to seek oblivion as a masseuse at a little, insignificant spa.

But the horror was not wholly as of old. It was no more the mere shattering of high and close-hugged hope. Rather was it as if she held the key of some ghastly, long-locked room, at whose opening a Borgia should be brought to justice, yet which, unfastened, would gape at her its wide and everlasting reproach. For the secret had come to her in the exercise of her profession, and the Borgia had lain, a patient, in her dexterous massaging grasp.

She had asked for Mrs. Walton; she had been directed up the easy-falling stairs to the door of Number Ten. Her knock had had its answer; she had entered, had seen the recumbent figure in the bed. The face was half hidden in the pillows; the woman lay there, passive and inert. Mary Crawshay had paused in the middle of the room.

"I am the masseuse," she said. "Doctor Hammond has sent me to you."

The answer came to her softly and dully.

"Yes. He told me that massage was desirable, and I did not disagree. But it is waste of time. I have had treatment in every spa in Europe. Nothing can ever do me any good."

Mary Crawshay started, without knowing why. The voice, with its curious, cosmopolitan accent, seemed familiar. The strange dejection of it breathed an ice-cold wind. But the face was mercifully hidden still.

Habit forced the girl to a consoling commonplace. "You mustn't talk like that," she said; "you'll never get better if you do. The baths work miracles, and you won't know yourself in a week!" As she spoke, she walked over to the dressing-table and took off her straw hat. Then she rolled up the sleeves of her blouse and came over beside the bed.

"Now," she began cheerfully, "the left arm and shoulder, is it not? Doctor Hammond mentioned that the neuritis was there. Thank you. That will do nicely."

The patient was passive still—passive and indifferent, both. She lay on her back with shut eyes while the girl began the light *effleurage* movements upon the emaciated arm. It was at its wasted bloodlessness that the masseuse first looked. But, as her hands travelled shoulderwards, the woman's face compelled her gaze. Then the eyes opened, and, before they shut again, rested upon her own. And Mary Crawshay, in one devastating moment, knew.

The great brown eyes were bright no longer; their sockets were runnelled and ravaged with destroying tears. The cheeks had gone from dusky cream to greyness; the full lips were shrivelled, and drooped, thinly, into corners which seemed to have no end. But the nose, with its hardly perceptible malformation of nostril, left Mary Crawshay no doubt; while at the extreme top, where it joined the low forehead, a prophetic eyebrow trespassed—the earnest once of wilfulness, now of other and more terrible things.

The masseuse was no neurotic. Till she came to Netherwich, she had played outdoor games all her life. Her instincts and training saved her now. Only for one second did she falter. That second was like an hour. The floor came up to meet her, the room spun, and the ceiling about her seemed to dip and dive.

And upon that, for another and darker second, her hands hungered to grip the long,

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thin-tendoned throat. Then those hands moved, lightning-like, over the fleshless frame, vieing—out-distanced always—with her aching brain, in which a wild, unspoken voice was crying aloud.

"Oh, what am I to do? Heaven help me to keep cool! Give me strength! I want time—time to think! Arthur, Arthur, what am I to do?"

She passed from *effleurage* to *tapotement*, from *pétrissage* to hack and flail—ran, like a whirlwind, through the whole gamut of the masseur's scale. But the pace was too fierce. At last she slackened. Then she ceased altogether. But, as she set a blanket upon the exposed shoulder, she felt a sudden shudder under her touch. A new and terrible thought had birth.

"Suppose she knows! Suppose she, too, has recognised! She has hardly spoken . . . She may escape the moment I am gone. But she *can't* know. She could never have kept so cool. She's a bundle of bones and nerves."

Then the need for reassurance drove her into speech. An unknown voice—like the voice of a ventriloquist's puppet—sounded on her lips.

"Do you like the treatment? It is really very soothing, and will do you good."

This time the subconscious voice did not shout. It whispered and reproached. "Hypocrite! hypocrite!" it said. "To talk like that, and to long in your heart to help the hangman's rope!" And then, growing loud and fierce again, it implored high Heaven once more. "Oh, I can't bear it! What am I to do? Help me to keep cool!"

The spoken words had their mournful answer.

"Nothing does me any good. I can't sleep. I want to die! Oh, *can't* you put me to sleep?"

It was then that the unspoken appeal had its reply, in shape a swift inspiring, a heaven-sent idea. A trick flashed upon Mary Crawshay, taught her long since at the hospital. If she could only put it to use, she could escape a full half hour earlier from the room, whose atmosphere pressed on her like a hostile physical force. She would be saved thirty minutes of torture and deception—could gain just that much sooner the misty autumn night, for which her whole being was hungry and half mad. Hope leapt up, live and quick, in her heart.

"I will try," she said eagerly. "But you must cheer up"—the mockery of it! "You must try not to think." The words were out before she could check them. What sort of thoughts save one could this woman have? "Turn over on your body—so. Let your face lie sideways on the pillow. *Now!*"

She began the treatment again, gently at first, then with increasing force. Her soft, sensitive fingers worked to an unsung tune—to a lullaby such as little children use. She brought all her will to bear, setting it on her task with one long centred effort that slowly, surely won. She felt the prostrate figure gradually relax; she redoubled her efforts of body and brain. For a quarter of an hour she strove. Then, little by little, her fingers slowed. Presently they stopped altogether, ceasing almost imperceptibly, as a pianist ends a *motif* on faint and half-touched notes. And Mary Crawshay found herself looking down upon a Borgia who slept.

Again pity invaded her heart, and she remembered many things. Amongst them, one towered out. They two had loved the self-same man. That man had made havoc of their lives. And if Arthur Lemarchand's wife, half Lombard and half Irish, had been jealous with all the passionate fierceness of her mixed descent, Arthur Lemarchand had given her deep, abundant cause.

But the deed . . . and the manner of it! The recollection and its horror paralysed Mary Crawshay's limbs. She stood staring and unable to move. At last, with trembling fingers, she lifted the bed-clothes and covered the shoulder which had lain exposed. She staggered across to the dressing-table, put on her hat, lowered the gas, and tiptoed on to the landing, leaving the door unlatched. She did not hear the Borgia move and moan. For she was going down the easy-falling stairs, clutching at their balustrade. Below lay the red-tiled hall and the double doors, and beyond them the longed-for coldness of the autumn night.

But the proprietress, on the entresol, stood barring her path.

She was a woman who had put many patients in the girl's way. Like Mary Crawshay, her whole heart was in her job. She was very jealous of the house's good name.

"Half a minute!" she said. "I just wanted to speak to you about the lady in Number Ten!" Her voice dropped, whispering and discreet.

Mary Crawshay faced her speechless, setting her back against the wall. Miss Batten



"Mary Crawshay found herself looking down upon a Borgia who slept."

stared a moment, then threw out an impulsive hand.

"I say, you *do* look bad!" she cried. "Is anything the matter?"

The girl snatched wildly at the opening. "It's the season," she blurted, "and so many patients in one day. September's always the hardest month. I shall be glad when the winter comes, and I can get a change." And then she forced herself to the thing which had to be faced. "You were asking . . . about the lady in Number Ten. Is it anything in particular?"

Miss Batten shrugged plump shoulders and explained.

"It's nothing definite, you know, but there's something about her that makes me afraid. She takes nearly all her meals upstairs, and when she *does* come down to dinner, she seems to be on the verge of hysterics all the time. The maid who does her room says that she cries from morning till night. That's exaggeration, of course, but I'm nervous, all the same. It's silly of me, in a way, but she strikes me as having something terrible on her mind; and, of course, if—if anything happened, it would do the house no good." She paused, and then went on. "Tell me candidly, now. What do you think of her?"

What did she think of her? What, rather, did she know? And what was she going to *say?*

A swift vertigo saved her. Her hand went up to her aching head, and she blundered sideways across the wall. But for Miss Batten's arm, she would have fallen sheer.

"Oh, I *am* sorry!" cried that good woman, all penitence. "It's a shame to badger you when you're so done up! Come along to my room, and let me give you something. As for Mrs. Walton, she can wait. I'll ask Doctor Hammond himself to-morrow what he thinks." She put her arm round Mary Crawshay's waist and began to help her slowly downstairs.

But the need to get out of the house—the overmastering instinct to be alone—conquered obligation and all else. Behind lay the stuffy little room and Miss Batten's mothering care; before her the green, brass-handled doors, and beyond them the road and room to breathe. Hastily—rudely, even—she escaped the detaining arm and slipped across the red-tiled hall.

"I'm all right—quite all right. So many thanks," she called, "but I won't stop. I must get home at once."

The proprietress followed her, saw her hurry down the drive. Then she returned across the hall. "Overwork and overstrain—that's what it is," she thought. But there was no blame in her heart. She, too, knew the need to reap while the harvest endured, for the winter months were lean indeed at the little Midland spa.

Outside the gate of the boarding-house, Mary Crawshay had hurried up the steep hill. She went hot-foot past the villas and on into the country lanes. She made a great circle of the town, which lay, for the most part, in a hollow, blanketed with mist. And presently she was back again where her walk had begun, yet far as ever from a decision—torn and divided in mind, tossed this way and that by all the winds of thought.

She had come upon a secret in the exercise of her profession. That alone stayed stable and sure. But what a secret! Did not its graveness—which, since it touched her own life, was a horror, too—absolve her from all scruples, and make it her duty to act?

The woman at the boarding-house was a murderess who had escaped justice for three years. The crime had touched Mary Crawshay's own life. It had kept green a memory which would otherwise have faded and died. And yet she hesitated. Once scruples would have gone to the winds. To-day they opposed her like a rope-lashed barricade. Mary Crawshay did not come of the self-analysing class, so she did not understand. The dispensing hand of Time softens all things, even hate and desire for revenge. More than that. Since she had worked for her living, and had mixed with the ailing flotsam of the world, she had gained, without knowing it, the sympathy and wide outlook which come from seeing physical suffering at first hand.

The clocks below her struck eleven times, and yet she stood upon the hill, with the secret whirling in her head. If only she could confide it! If there were but one person to whom she could go for advice! Miss Batten? No. *She* was pushed hastily aside. After, there was not a soul, unless—unless she went to Doctor Hammond himself.

He was her friend. He had helped her since the first day that she had gone to ask him for work, after putting up her plate outside the little black-beamed cottage on the Murcester road. She had practically all the massage that it was his to dole. For a chance word had revealed their common tastes, and there was a bond between them

because their stock and early environments were akin. He, too, was of the upper suburbs, and once he had played wing three-quarter for Richmond, while she had lived in that cradle of football, Blackheath.

He was her friend. If she had not carried Arthur Lemarchand's image in her heart, she might have seen that he was more. But a tragic happening had nailed an old passion to the wall of recollection, and had kept her, all unconsciously, in love with love. Of this, Hammond knew nothing. He only guessed that she had suffered, and, guessing it, saw that haste would ruin all.

Below her his house lay, islanded in a sea of darkened hotels. She felt her impulse quicken into conquering strength. It overmastered her, caught her, whirled her up, carried her hurried and eager along. If there was a light, she would ask admittance. If not—— The question needed no reply. For the study window shone, and she had rung the clamouring bell. Footsteps sounded in the hall. It was too late to regret or to go back.

The door opened. It was Hammond himself. He faced her in amazement. She had left her gloves in the Borgia's room, and she had forgotten to pull down her blouse's rolled-up sleeves.

"You!" he cried. His voice should have told her the truth to which her eyes were blind.

"I am in great trouble," she panted. "I want advice, so I came to you."

The wonder went from his face. Pleasure usurped it, then doubt. Even in his gladness he thought of her reputation.

"Hadn't you better—won't you come in?" he hesitatingly asked. "I shall be only too glad to give you all the help in my power."

Mary Crawshay had forgotten everything but her need. She only knew that he was big and gentle and always kind—that here alone, in this one house in all Netherwich, could she speak her distracted heart. In a flash she was across the threshold. Hammond, marvelling, stepped past her and led the way to his study. It was green-carpeted and softly lit, and many oak-framed photographs hung upon its walls. Above one of these, in the mantelpiece's centre, rested a silver-tasselled cap of red velvet with an English rose and a date. He motioned her into a great leather-covered, saddle-bag chair, and stood looking down on her from beside the fire.

"What is the trouble?" he asked gently.

The girl glanced up at him, moistening dry lips.

"It's Mrs. Walton," she stammered—"the patient whom you sent me to massage to-day."

"She is worse?"

"I don't know. I haven't come about that." She stopped dead, then suddenly blurted out the truth.

"She's Madeleine Lemarchand, the woman who killed her husband by putting powdered glass in his food!"

"What?"

He took a step forward, then recoiled.

"How do you know?" he cried. "How do you know?"

There was a long pause. At last Mary Crawshay spoke. "Sit down," she said—"sit down and don't look at me! I'll tell you everything."

Hammond hesitated, but obeyed. He walked across to the chair on the other side of the hearth.

"Listen," began Mary Crawshay. "I was once engaged to her husband. He jilted me. He went abroad and married her in Paris. He treated her abominably. She was jealous—madly jealous—and in the end she killed him. As you know, she was never caught. Arthur Lemarchand was very rich, and had given her a great deal of jewellery. She took it all with her. I suppose she sold it to support herself. Anyway, she escaped justice—until to-day. And now I have found her—at Miss Batten's—too tired of it all—too ill—to wear any longer the disguises that her face and hair show she has worn."

"Great Heavens!" said Hammond again. "Great Heavens!" He began to stride fiercely up and down the room. "And you," he asked at last—"what are you going to do?"

"I don't know; I can't make up my mind. I want you to advise me. That is why I am here."

Hammond swung round and spoke from behind the chair whose back his hands gripped. His face was the face of a man who stakes his all on one cast.

"What do you *want* to do?" he asked slowly.

"Again I don't know. You see, I was fond of Arthur Lemarchand in spite of everything. I shall never be fond of anyone else. For three years it has been my dream to find her. But now, somehow, it all seems different. I don't feel towards her as I thought. I'm only sorry—sorry for all she has gone through. She's ill—very ill—and terribly unhappy, and I feel that in my heart I should like to let her go."

"You would like to let her go!" The

words came staccato and sharp, but the man's face shone.

The masseuse nodded at the fire.

"Yes," she answered, "that is what I want. The secret came to me in my work, and though I'm not bound like you are, I feel as if in a way I was one of you. But if you think it's my duty to denounce her, I will. I *know* you wouldn't give me bad advice."

She rose and leaned against the mantelpiece. Hammond slipped round the great chair and came to her side.

"I am her doctor," he said; "to me her secret is inviolable. But *you*—you must do what you think best. As her doctor, I ask you to keep the secret. As the friend to whom you have come for advice, I say do as your conscience dictates."

Mary Crawshay shook her head. "My mind is made up. I hated her—because she killed Arthur, but I'm sorry for her, because she's a woman who was wronged and who has suffered. It was only the old unhappiness that unbalanced me and made me think I could denounce her. You see, I'd brooded so much on it all that I was staggered. I wasn't myself. I was so fond of him—even after he went away. I hadn't seen him for two years, and yet, when—when she killed him, I simply had to leave home and take up this work. I had to do something to forget. My work brought me real happiness, and although I dreamed of finding Arthur's wife, I thought till to-night I had almost forgotten *him*. But now I know I haven't. It was seeing her that brought it all back—that threw me off my balance—that made me, for a little while, as bad as she herself once was."

Her hands gesticulated in eager explanation. Hammond stepped swiftly forward and caught them in his own.

"You *had* forgotten," he said firmly—"you *had* forgotten! I knew you had." There was triumph in his voice, and Mary Crawshay for the first time understood. The scales were gone from her eyes. She knew, too, that his touch thrilled her, and she was afraid. But she was loyal to the old love still.

"I shall never quite forget," she made reply. But though before she spoke she believed it, she knew, when the sentence was ended, that she had lied.

Hammond only smiled. Then he held open the door.

"You are wrong," he answered, though he pressed the charge no more. The outworks were won, but the time and place of victory were not yet. So in silence he walked beside her to the gate.

"One question," he began at last. "You recognised her immediately. Did she know *you?*"

"I think not—I am sure of it. We only met once. Arthur had never told her about our engagement. It was I who had reason to remember—not she!"

"I am glad—*very* glad. I will think over what is best to be done for her. Go home now, and try not to worry any more. In the morning I will come and see you. I shall want to hear your decision then."

"My decision? But you have it now."

Hammond, in the darkness, smiled again.

"Not that one," he whispered, "but another." And she felt herself pushed gently into the street. The gate clicked after her, and she went up the hill again to her cottage on the Murcester road, with throbbing pulses and bewildered, trembling feet. It seemed to her as if a lifetime and all that decided it had been crowded into a single terrific hour.

The night was sleepless and full of waking dreams. Hammond was there always, and Arthur Lemarchand, too. The Borgia was almost forgotten—*that* decision was easy and now irrevocably made. She saw only two people—one the man who had made her miserable, the other him who had, from their first meeting, done nothing but be helpful and kind, to whom she owed so much, who had made things smooth for her, and had set her feet on the path of success. She had things out with herself again and again in the interminable hours that preceded the dawn. She realised her dependence upon Hammond—knew him strong, felt her heart's citadel an easy capture, about to be taken by storm. She began to see that she had made a fetish of outworn affection, that she had set up a clay image in the temple of her heart. Out of the darkness their faces looked at her—Lemarchand's, handsome, impetuous yet feeble-chinned; Hammond's, firm, resolute of purpose, and kind, whose sight thrilled her, now that the scales were gone from her self-blinded eyes.

Above all, three things helped her to see plainly. She had of instinct gone to Hammond in her trouble. She could not do without him, and she no longer bore the Borgia hate. The third of these assured her as nothing else could, because for years it had been her dream to find and denounce the murderess; and now that the woman was

delivered into her hands, she only hungered to save. Had she still loved Lemarchand's memory—— The recurring thought sent her shuddering again and again.

With the dawn came decision, and certainty, not calm but yet compelling, assumed its own. She rose and dressed and did her housework, and went out into the lanes. Then she came back, breakfasted, and tidied the tiny room. Sitting in a high-backed chair, her feet resting on the ruddled bricks that rimmed the hearth, she felt nervous but very sure—also very happy, because she knew that the future was sure, too, and that, out of horror, happiness most wonderfully would come. As for the Borgia, what did it matter where she drifted, so that she went undenounced, and troubled her—Mary Crawshay's—life no more?

It was barely nine when Hammond passed up the little path and knocked at the door. She jumped up, hesitated, then dropped back into her chair. "Come in!" she called. The latch lifted, and he was at her side. She blushed furiously as she gave him her hand, but she paled again at the graveness of his face.

"What is the matter?" she cried. "Tell me at once!"

He deliberated a moment, and she leaped to the awful worst.

"She is a prisoner! She has given herself up!"

He shook his head.

"No," he answered. "It is bad, but better than that."

Again he paused; then he took her unresisting hands.

"She is dead," he said slowly; "she poisoned herself last night!"

"Oh!" cried Mary Crawshay, getting up. "Oh, how terrible! The poor, poor thing!"

She dropped down into a chair by the table and hid her face in her arms. When at last she looked up, her cheeks were wet.

"Tell me how it happened," she said shakily.

"She took chloral—an overdose. Miss Batten was nervous about her, and couldn't sleep. She saw a light in the room, and went in during the night. I was fetched at once. It was too late to do anything."

"Did you"—the words forced themselves upon the girl's dry lips—"do you think she did it because she knew who I was?"

Hammond hesitated once more. That was what he had been wondering, too. His answer, when it came, consoled though it did not deny.

"It is impossible to say. It is useless to think about that. For my part, selfish as it sounds, I think all has happened for the best. Life was a burden to her every minute that she lived. She did terrible harm. She has done great good. She has shown you something that you would never have seen for yourself."

Mary Crawshay looked up. "I don't understand," she stammered. "What is it that she has taught me?" But in her heart of hearts she knew.

"That you were in love with love," came the answer swiftly; and with equal swiftness she found herself taken in his hungry arms. She opposed no resistance. It seemed to her as if everything in life had suddenly become easy and smooth; and only then did she realise how utterly blind she had been.

Presently, for all her happiness, she remembered the dead woman again.

"Now that she is dead," she whispered, "we can let her rest. There is no need, even now, to let anyone know. It would be cruel to have scandal over her grave. You think so, too? Tell me that you do!"

He stooped and kissed her once more upon the lips.

"The secret is yours—yours and mine," he said.

LORD STRANLEIGH, PHILANTHROPIST.

By ROBERT BARR.

V. WHEN SPADES WERE TRUMPS.

FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS OFFERED.

"A MAN of leisure, possessing ample means, a portion of which he desires to use in any plan of betterment that may commend itself to him, wishes to avail himself of outside suggestions, being disappointed in the results of past endeavour on his own initiative. Will pay five hundred pounds sterling to any person furnishing a practical idea—an idea which, when carried out, will prove beneficial to humanity. No personal interview can be accorded in any circumstances. Competitors must abide by the decision of the man who pays the money. Address Berkim & Duncannon, Solicitors, Old Jewry, London, E.C."

The above advertisement had appeared in all the leading newspapers of Great Britain, and now Lord Stranleigh was standing the brunt of it. He had let loose a white avalanche upon himself. Every postman brought in a sackful of letters forwarded from London, and some of them brought two. These communications, by order of Blake, were dumped in a corner of the large parlour one stair up, whose broad balcony overlooked the sea.

Stranleigh, his two hands deep in his trousers pockets, gazed at the ever-increasing heap with an expression of dismay.

"If this keeps on much longer, Blake," he said, "we'll have the police down on us, certain that we are engaged in some fraudulent enterprise. It is only an arrant swindle that can call out such an immediate and voluminous response from the gullible British public."

"Five hundred pounds is a tempting bait, my lord," said Blake, who, knees on the floor, was making an ineffectual effort to sort out the letters.

"I suppose it is, yet it seems amazing that so small an amount should produce such an appalling result. If I'd advertised for someone to lend me five hundred pounds, I don't suppose the population would be tumbling over one another, anxious to accommodate me, although this is a rich country."

"Oh, I'm not so sure of that," replied the philosophic Blake. "If you advertised in your own name, you could get all the money you demanded. To him that hath shall be given."

"In my own name, yes. That's just the trouble. The secrecy I had hoped to preserve is itself suspicious. I feel the all-seeing eye of the Post Office upon me, and I dread the police-station."

"You don't need to dread it," cried Blake, as he rose upstanding, and brushed the knees of his trousers, abandoning his task in despair. "I'm the person who would bear the brunt. These letters are all redirected to me. This house is leased in my name. I beg you to observe that the solicitors in London have abandoned the task of redirecting by hand, and the later letters are all decorated by a rubber stamp, bearing the words: 'E. J. Blake, Saltwater House, Marine Parade, Lyme Regis.' No," concluded the flippant Blake, "the aristocracy in this case goes scathless, and it's me for the prison cell, as my American friends remark."

"My dear Blake, if you'd read less American slang, and peruse, as I do, the classics of our own time—*par example*, 'The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes'—you would comprehend the inadequacy of such protection as you offer me. The Post Office Department, besides acting as our modern argosy, is also a modern Argus (forgive the attempted pun). When it turns any of its hundred eyes upon the sudden augmentation of letters all readdressed from London to one man at Lyme Regis, and calls in Sherlock Holmes, he will merely give a glance at E. J. Blake, and, seeing his naïve, innocent, cherubic face, will instantly pass him by, and speedily discover the real villain of the piece."

"I rather imagine," encouraged Blake, "that this plethora of letters will soon dwindle away, and then cease."

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They were both startled by a sharp double knock at the drawing-room door, the way from the street being left open, so that the postal emissaries could come right up the stair without a preliminary use of the front knocker. A postman and two assistants entered, each carrying a well-filled bag, the contents of which visibly augmented the mountain on the floor. The postman, standing erect, mopped his brow with a handkerchief, sighed deeply, and paused as if to gather strength for the return.

Stranleigh put his hand in his pocket and drew out several golden sovereigns, which he presented to the postman.

"I wish," he said, "you'd divide that among all those who are doing this extra work."

The postman gratefully accepted, and with his two assistants retired.

"That's bribery," said Blake severely, "and will add considerably to your sentence."

"No, it is merely acting on the text 'the labourer is worthy of his hire.' Besides, if generous tips are to be earned, these men won't complain of the extra work. Now, Blake, what do you propose we should do? Engage a selection committee, and set them at the work of opening these communications?"

"I think not. Too much publicity, too little efficiency. The task is less formidable than it seems. I'll sit down at this table, and cut open letter after letter. A mere glance at each will show whether anything original is put forward. I imagine that the bulk of this correspondence can be classified in the 'begging letter' category, with which a capacious waste-paper basket may deal."

Blake picked up one of the letters, tore it open, scrutinised it for a moment, and tossed it aside.

"There you have it," he said. "If you place at the disposal of the writer the amount you wish to expend, he will distribute it among the deserving, after making personal investigation of their worth. For this service he will charge no salary, providing the five hundred pound reward is sent to him by return."

"Generous man! Nevertheless, the waste-basket yawns."

There came another knock at the door, and a boy handed in four of the London morning papers, which showed that it was just past eleven o'clock in the forenoon. Blake took the journals and gave them to Stranleigh.

"If you will seat yourself in that comfortable arm-chair on the balcony, and read the news, I'll see what impression I can make on this pile during the next two hours."

Had Stranleigh, instead of opening his morning papers, gazed to the west, he would have seen part of the water-front of the most picturesque, unfashionable, and unconventional seaside resort in England. Towards the end of the parade, the Cobb made a sort of climax to it, Cobb being Lyme's name for a very stout wharf or breakwater which sticks out into the Channel, and then turns to the east, enclosing a little harbour. No one knows when the Cobb was first built, although it is mentioned in a document bearing the date 1313—a doubly unlucky year, if we believe the superstition of its figuring—but the Cobb never can become ancient, because the wild sea sweeps it away every now and then, after which it must be rebuilt by the persevering British.

Alongside of it landed the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, who so went inland to his defeat and his beheading, and on its granite surface a dozen followers of his were hanged. Great things have happened on the Cobb, both in history and in fiction—one as real nowadays as the other. The Cobb might be called the A.B.C. of the novelist, for Jane Austen, Walter Besant, and Conan Doyle refer to doings there or thereabouts in their respective books, "Persuasion," "'Twas in Trafalgar's Bay," and "Micah Clarke."

When the bells of the town struck twelve, Stranleigh looked through the open window at his absorbed secretary, who sat like a statue in a heap of discarded letters which he had thrown over his shoulder one by one, as he *viséed* them. He now rested his elbow on the table, and was perusing some closely-written foolscap sheets.

"Well, Blake," cried Stranleigh, "have you struck oil at last?"

"I rather think so," he replied, rising, and with his feet shuffling the loose *débris* to another corner of the room. Then, stepping out on the balcony, he took a seat opposite his chief.

"This man," he said, "seems to be a literary person, who begins his letter in blank-verse:—

> "'Oh, masters, lords, and rulers in all lands,
> How will the Future reckon with this Man?
> How answer his brute question in that hour
> When whirlwinds of rebellion shake the world?
> How will it be with kingdoms and with kings—
> With those who shaped him to the thing he is—
> When this dumb terror shall reply to God,
> After the silence of the centuries?'

"'Your advertisement states that you wish to benefit humanity. I claim no originality for my suggestion, but the time that has elapsed since it was first mooted gives you an opportunity of applying to it modern methods and modern thought, discarding what you may deem cumbrous, and adding improvements from the knowledge of to-day. For encouragement, I ask you to read Rudyard Kipling's poem, "Pharaoh and the Sergeant":—

"'Said England unto Pharaoh: "I must make a man of you,
That will stand upon his feet and play the game."

And the poem goes on to show how the sergeant made a rifleman from mud, "drilled a black man white, and made a mummy fight."

"'If an Englishman, as is proven, attains such success with the semi-savage, ignorant Egyptian, in preparing him for the destructive art of war, how much more effective should be the result if an Englishman took his derelict fellow-citizens and trained them in the arts of peace; and if, in doing so, he taught Great Britain the way to become self-sustaining in the matter of food, how much greater would be his claim to our gratitude!

"'I find, in chapter twelve of Robert Blatchford's book "Britain for the British," that one acre of our land yields twenty-eight bushels of wheat, while the same amount of land in certain parts of the United States gives eighty-seven to a hundred and fifteen bushels. Minnesota raises thirty-one tons of potatoes to the acre, while on the same surface Great Britain produces only six tons. Eight and a half bushels of wheat will feed one man for a year. By intensive culture, Major Hallet raised that amount of wheat on one-twentieth of an acre—that is, an acre produced the almost incredible quantity of a hundred and seventy bushels.

"'My proposal is this. Purchase fifty acres of fertile land, which just now is cheap enough even in the vicinity of towns. Erect upon this land a quadrangular building, after the general plan of a monastery or an Oxford college. The side towards the road should be two storeys high, containing a hall, seating comfortably fifty men, a library, a dining-room, kitchens and everything pertaining thereto, a billiard room, and a bowling alley, all fully equipped. The other three sides of the quadrangle should be occupied by a building one storey in height, the roof of the inner side coming down to form, round three sides of the quadrangle, a verandah or cloister, the ends of which communicate by doors with the main building. These wings are to hold forty or fifty small apartments of two rooms each; one man, one apartment.

"'Divide the property into plots, which may measure anything you like, from forty feet square to an acre. In the first instance, I suggest choosing forty unmarried men, human derelicts, but men not more than fifty years old, sound in wind and limb—in other words, men who can work if they want to. I'd give each a plot of land and shelter, with free board for at least a year, furnishing him also with a spade and whatever other horticultural implements the head gardener considered needful.

"'So far as drink is concerned, pure water and good sound beer would be provided. I should prefer not less than ten per cent. of the men to be habitual drunkards, and any other vice, such as thieving, foul language, combativeness, and so forth, would be welcomed in moderation, for our object is to learn whether or not a mud Englishman can be formed into a man.

"'The staff I should select with great care, insisting on honesty, strict temperance, and all the virtues that can be obtained for good pay. I consider very important the retaining of an expert accountant, who would set down all incomings and outgoings. The manager ought to be a clear-headed business man, free from fads, and the instructing gardener thoroughly competent and up-to-date. Within a year you would be able to show what can be done with the land, and what with the men on the land.

"'Prince Kropotkin says that by one day's labour, on one-twentieth of an acre, one man can produce a year's bread for one man—that is, eight and a half bushels of wheat. Adopting this as a basis to go on, a plan carrying out my suggestion might do the double duty of solving the question of the unemployed and proving that England can feed herself without foreign assistance.

"'Yours sincerely,

"'STILLSON CRANE.'"

Blake looked up from his reading, and saw that Lord Stranleigh was gazing dreamily out at the blue Channel, probably not listening to the end of the long letter.

"I'm afraid," he ventured, "that this does not interest you."

His lordship woke up with a smile.

"Oh, yes, it does, but it is merely Robert

Owen's township community plan over again, or Fourier's system of phalanges uncomplicated by the family question."

"I'm perfectly certain that I couldn't."

"Oh! Why?"

"Because there is a missing ingredient



"Harrison lit the weed and expressed his satisfaction."

"Then it has been tried before?"

"In a sort of way, yes, but never by a man of sense like myself."

"You think you could do the trick?"

that I am not allowed to use, while the sergeant in Kipling's poem was given that liberty. Kipling's intensely practical mind—an odd quality in a poet—indicates the vital

point, and, as you finished the letter, I was just trying to remember those lines in the poem which hit the nail on the head. I cannot remember the first line, but the second, third, and fourth were something like this :—

"There was faith and hope, and whacking and despair,
While the sergeant give his orders, and he combed old Pharaoh out,
And England didn't look to know or care."

"Isn't it 'While the sergeant gave his cautions'?" suggested Blake.

"Perhaps it is. It's the whacking and the combing I'm thinking of, and the line—

"Translated by a stick (which is really half the trick).

"It's a good deal more than half the trick. England wouldn't allow us to comb these derelicts out. The sergeant had a great advantage over me. He worked in a silent desert, under the burning sun. I'd have to work in gossipy, prying, interfering England, under the rules of the County Council or the Local Government Board, which are worse than any tropical sun that ever struck a man with heat apoplexy. I might possess Roosevelt's big stick, but I should not be permitted to use it. Our phrase 'Are we down-hearted?' should be changed into 'Are we soft-hearted?' Yes, and soft-headed. The answer is found in the old rhyme 'We are, we are, we are!'"

"Then this scheme is n.g.? Mr. Stillson Crane, of Manchester, doesn't get the five hundred pounds?"

"Oh, I didn't say that. I have always desired to build a monastery, and this idea of peopling it with secular monks, some of whom can steal and swear, rather appeals to me. I feel a sneaking admiration and envy of the lives lived by those monks who usefully toiled in the soil, and who taught ignorant peasants the intensive culture of their day. I frequently take a few moments off to curse the vandals who destroyed English monasteries, and bereft our land of an architectural heritage so lovely. But let us get down to business. We are now at the beginning of September. Could such a monastery as this man indicates be completed by the first of April, which strikes me as a most appropriate date?"

"I see no reason why it shouldn't," replied Blake.

"My Dorsetshire estate, ten miles away, could easily spare fifty acres, and its soil is good. I'll erect my phalanstery there. Now, Blake, you'll need to get busy. We've never before built a monastery, so we must select an architect who can unite exterior beauty with interior usefulness, and set him at the plans as speedily as possible."

"Whom do you suggest?" asked Blake.

"I've no suggestion to make; I don't know enough about the subject. We must have authoritative advice. Write to the editor of *The British Architect*, and he will name the best man for the job. Meanwhile, get in touch with Stillson Crane, of Manchester, and invite him to Lyme Regis. You and I will change places. I become the private secretary, you the capitalist. An interview with Crane will show us whether or not he is a practical man. The line in his letter about getting a manager without fads impresses me in his favour, and if personal contact supports that impression, you will make arrangements for him to be superintendent."

Blake noted down these particulars on the back of the Manchester man's letter, then he said—

"If Crane is the capable man you expect him to be, he will very soon learn that you are the capitalist, and not I."

"I don't think so. I shall prove a much more courteous, deferential private secretary than you are, but, in any case, you will see him first, and report to me. Perhaps it would not be advisable for me to meet him at all, for I will now confess something that may surprise you. I intend devoting next spring and summer to the *rôle* of human derelict. I shall occupy two rooms in my phalanstery. I shall wield a spade under the eye of the gardening instructor."

"You won't stick to it for a week."

"There you go! I should never say so rude a thing as that to my employer. You see, Blake, I shall be the most unskilful of the derelicts gathered under the wing of the Crane. I produce as little that is useful as any one of this chain gang, but I consume more than a thousand of them put together. I am myself a problem that England must solve in the near future. My fellow-tramps consume merely beer and sausages and mashed, when they can get these delicacies, but I'm a purple and fine linen vagabond, equally useless and much more destructive. I've never garnered eight and a half bushels of wheat of my own growing, nor dug up six tons of potatoes, yet, in spite of your sneer regarding my early quitting, I'll bet you a sovereign that, to use a horticultural simile, I shall prove the last rose of summer left blooming alone when my vagrant companions have stampeded and gone."

"I'm not a betting man," said Blake. "Now, what about this heap of letters? If Crane gets the five hundred, it will be unnecessary to read further."

"Not so, my dear Blake. You cannot evade your duties by any such plea as that. Every letter must at least be glanced at, and if there are other suggestions that please me, I will pay the promised price for them."

"I don't see where I am to get the time."

"You'll be busy for a week or two, while plans are being drawn and contracts let, but after that the long winter is at your disposal. There goes the luncheon bell. Let us to our trenchers. This sea air has made me hungry."

* * * * *

As a matter of fact, the new monastery was inaugurated on the first of March instead of the first of April. The instructing gardener had informed his ignorant employer that April was altogether too late in the year to begin horticultural work. He himself, with a staff of hired labourers, set to work in the middle of February, making preparations for the campaign, ploughing the land that was to produce three hundred and forty bushels of wheat—that is, eight and a half bushels for each man—to be grown in a field of fourteen acres, since the head gardener scouted the idea of each man raising his own quantity of wheat on his own small allotment.

The men were all chosen from London, and a motley crew they were, none of them familiar with gardening or with country life. Stranleigh, dressed in corduroy and fustian, made a quite perfect theatrical labouring man, who would have delighted the heart of a London stage manager, but would have deceived a farmer not for one moment. Blake had seen to it that apartment No. 1 was allotted to Stranleigh, No. 1 being the two rooms next to the main building on the right-hand side. Thus Blake could call upon his chief without going down the cloisters and passing any other apartment.

Stillson Crane was a middle-aged man of most benevolent appearance. His long beard, which had once been black, was now tinged with grey. One could guess he was a lover of his fellow-men, not only by his benign expression, but by his clothes of solemn black, which fitted him so badly. He possessed the gift of tongues, and was a most eloquent exhorter. Indeed, if the forty had followed the counsels of their Ali Baba, they would have been much more model citizens than they were.

The head gardener was a man who knew his business, but who speedily found that the business he had learned was not that which he was compelled chiefly to exercise. His principal duty proved to be keeping the men at work, because the moment he disappeared from one side of the building, the amateur horticulturists dropped their spades, filled up clay pipes, and, the better to enjoy their smoke, sat in a row with their backs against the phalanstery, ready to jump up in a hurry when a whistled signal warned them that the gardener was approaching.

Nevertheless, for the first week, everything went on with reasonable smoothness; then the result of regular meals and excellent food began to exercise an effect. All hunger-cringing had departed from the men, and Stranleigh, who studied his fellow-workers with unobserved eagerness, regarded this as a good sign. They were standing on their feet, as the poet said, and would soon be ready to play the game. The game, however, developed through three crises—first, the tobacco crisis, then the drink crisis, and, lastly, the financial crisis.

Although Stranleigh occupied two rooms furnished exactly like all the others, and although he partook of the same food with people from whom he instinctively shrank, he allowed himself one luxury—several boxes of good cigars that Blake had procured for him, and which were hidden under the bed. One evening, after supper, as the young man sat in his room, reading and enjoying his cigar, the door suddenly opened, and a rather forbidding-looking ruffian, known as Bert Harrison, entered. Harrison had proved himself an expert work-shirker, whose allotment was the most backward in the community. He was something of a politician, and already exercised a good deal of influence upon his fellows. He harangued them on occasion over a mug of beer, pointing out how the country should be governed.

Stranleigh threw down his book and rose to his feet.

"I beg your pardon," he said mildly, "but I didn't hear you knock."

"Right you are, mate," cried Bert affably. "Don't need worry about that, because I didn't knock. We're all comrades here, you know."

"I shouldn't think of entering your room without knocking," persisted Stranleigh.

"Oh, wouldn't you? It 'ud be all the

same to me. Friend of mine is welcome, however he comes. But then, you see, I come official. I'm a delegation. What the brethren wants to know is where you get them cigars you smoke?"

"I got them in London before I came here. Will you have one?"

Harrison accepted thankfully, lit the weed, and expressed his satisfaction.

"This is a bit of all right!" he cried admiringly. "This ain't no twopenny smoke. How much do they cost?"

"I'm sure I haven't the slightest idea," replied Stranleigh.

A broad smile illuminated the face of Bert Harrison. He expressed his enlightenment with a wink.

"Don't you fear, mate," he said. "No questions asked, but you do know how to pick out the goods. I thought them white, ladylike fingers of yours was made for something nippier than handling a spade. Well, talking about delegations, I'm asked by the comrades to make a strike for tobacco. Do you think old 'Longbeard' will come down?"

"I shouldn't wonder, if it's put to him nicely."

"That's just the point, and so we thought you'd be the best man to do the chinning. There's five of us going in to see him now, and we want you to be spokesman."

"I don't mind. Tell me exactly what the demand is."

"Well, tobacco's just as much a necessity of life as beer is. The stuff the boys brought with them from London is all gone, and we've got no money to buy more, so the lads are hungry for a smoke."

"I'm willing to put the case before Mr. Crane, but I rather think the head gardener may object."

"Why?"

"From some remarks he made in the field, he seems to think tobacco interferes with work."

"Oh, blow the work!" said Harrison. "If he objects, we want you to talk him down. This state of things is cruel 'ard on smoking men. Even when a man gets into the workhouse he's allowed tobacco."

"Where's your delegation?"

"They're waiting outside."

"All right. Come along; we'll tackle old Crane."

Crane, Blake, and the gardener received the committee, and Stranleigh placed before them the case for the smoker. Crane said nothing at first, but, to Stranleigh's astonishment, the gardener spoke in favour of the men.

"I think," he said, "that at least an ounce of tobacco should be allowed to each man per day, but I want to superintend its distribution. I tell you what it is, men—those who do not do their share of work will not get their share of tobacco."

There was some grumbling at this, but Bert Harrison, in a bluff, manly way, accepted the proposition; and thus the delegation filed outside, where Bert's four comrades at once rounded on him, and complained bitterly of his supineness in agreeing to a condition so drastic.

"Why, you fatheads," said the leader, with unconcealed contempt, "don't you see that, for forty men, they'll get the tobacco down from London wholesale? That's all we need. Mentioning no names, there's them among us can pinch enough tobacco to give every man his share, gardener or no gardener." And once more he winked at Stranleigh.

This completely satisfied the delegation, who felt ashamed that so evident a solution had not occurred to them. The truth of Bert's remark was borne in upon Stranleigh when he rose next morning, and found that his boxes of cigars had been stolen during the night.

In spite of Crane's indefatigable efforts, it was evident that the men loathed the country more and more as time went on. A grand piano had been provided in the lecture hall, on which at times Blake performed very admirably. A huge phonograph gave all the popular selections of the day, and occasionally Crane delivered moral lectures on self-help, on the uplift, and what not, but speedily found himself without an audience when the men learned that attendance was not compulsory. These entertainments proved to be as inadequate a substitute for a low-down East End music-hall as sugared lemonade is to take the place of whisky on the palate of a confirmed drunkard.

When at last it became necessary to place a restriction on the consumption of beer, a demand was made for stronger drink, and this being refused, the men went on strike for a day and a half, succumbing at the end of that time through force of hunger, for it was "No work, no meals," a ukase which Harrison characterised as exceeding the vilest tyranny of Russia. Were they men, or were they not? The authorities, ably aided by the cook, appeared to think they were not.

The failure of this strike secured quietness and reasonable obedience for about ten days. Then an *émeute* occurred that nearly brought about the closing of the phalanstery. One afternoon the men deserted in a body and made for Lyme Regis. It was now the month of April, and the country was looking lovely; but although Browning wrote—

> Oh, to be in England,
> Now that April's there!

it is not insisted by anyone that these men journeyed forth to enjoy the beauties of Nature. Country caution was no match for city cleverness, and in some manner, during their journey, the pilgrims accumulated money, which they used in purchasing the strong waters of Lyme Regis, to such effect that four of them were locked away by the town constable. Blake, who followed in a motor-car, paid the fines and costs next morning.

Later, the magistrates investigated the phalanstery, but, influenced by the obvious good intentions of the reverend-looking Crane, they did nothing except warn him that, if a similar outbreak took place, the establishment would be compulsorily closed. Thefts were reported along the route, and although no proofs were forthcoming, Blake placed in the hands of the magistrates a cheque for the amount alleged to have been stolen.

The men next demanded that a certain amount of pocket-money should be dealt them, which request was acceded to, and a week later they made a strike for regular wages of not less than four shillings a day. They complained that really they had been working for nothing on somebody's land for somebody's benefit. These wages were refused, and Crane endeavoured to explain to the men the object of this self-help community; but the meeting broke up in disorder, and the earnest man was not listened to.

The forty promptly struck work, but once more were overcome by starvation; and although Bert Harrison declared this to be a favourite weapon of the capitalist, and offered to lead a raid upon the larder, the strike had gone too far. The hungry men knew that they could secure a meal, beer, and tobacco at once if they gave in, so, to Bert's chagrin, they paid as little attention to his eloquence as they had to Crane's, and surrendered on the terms that a meal should be served forthwith. Having fed sumptuously and drunk to their satisfaction, they instantly inaugurated their final strike.

All except Stranleigh were gathered in the central hall when they gave their ultimatum to Crane, who was on the verge of tears. They began proceedings by great stamping of feet, and by singing in lusty chorus the song—

> Eight hours' work,
> Eight hours' play,
> Eight hours' sleep, and
> Eight shillings a day.

When Stillson Crane, E. J. Blake, and the gardener took their places on the platform, they were received with boisterous cheers, arising from plenty of good food and a sufficient quantity of beer.

Bert Harrison was the spokesman. He demanded immediate payment for each man of eight shillings for every day they had put in at this workhouse, as he called it, also conveyances to take them to the station, and their fares to London. Poor Crane, who could scarcely control his voice, answered briefly that he had resigned his position, and, washing his hands of the whole affair, sat down. There was a great uproar at this, and charges of bad faith were hurled at the ex-manager; but Bert Harrison calmed the storm, and said, if their terms were not instantly accepted, they would proceed to destroy the building after helping themselves to its contents.

Blake rose and said curtly—

"You will now be addressed by one of yourselves—the man who can at once grant your request or refuse it. I beg to introduce Earl Stranleigh of Wychwood, owner of this estate and builder of this house."

There now mounted the platform a young man most exquisitely dressed. The uniform of the phalanstery had been discarded for the costume of Piccadilly. The audience was too amazed to vociferate. They had not observed, until Blake spoke, that one of their number was missing, and it was some moments before they recognised that the immaculate person who confronted them was their late fellow-worker.

"Gentlemen," began Stranleigh, in his most conciliatory voice; but Harrison sprang to his feet.

"So this is the secret of the good cigars——"

"That were stolen? Yes," said Stranleigh, with a smile.

"Never mind about that, my fine cock-a-doodle-doo. Before we allow you to speak, will you agree to give us eight shillings a day and railway fare?"

"Yes," replied Stranleigh suavely, "if you force me to do so."

"We do force you."

"That is courageous," said Stranleigh, "when you realise that double your number of policemen surround this building. I am told that some of you are wanted very badly by the authorities, and I think you foolish to leave shelter and safety to go out once more into the cruel world. If you insist on eight shillings a day, I shall, of course, accede to your request."

"We do insist," declared Harrison, but in a much less truculent voice. There were no answering cheers behind him; the word "police" seemed to have paralysed Bert's followers.

"Thank you, Mr. Harrison. That will save me a bit of money, as you would remark. Blake, how much did I say these men were to get?"

"A pound a day, my lord."

"Then just mark it down to eight shillings, Blake, and I hope Mr. Harrison's mob will not expostulate with him because of the reduction. Gentlemen, we have been merely trying an experiment, which comes to its conclusion with this meeting. It has cost me several thousands of pounds, but I don't in the least grudge the outlay. I think I understand better, than when I began, your objections to the plan. You hate work, and so, I must confess, do I."

He looked somewhat ruefully at his calloused hands, then smiled at his silent audience.

"My friend, Mr. Stillson Crane, thought he could make real men of you. I didn't know whether that was possible or not, being a very ignorant person, in the position of the girl about whom Sir W. S. Gilbert wrote. She didn't know whether she could waltz or not, but would rather like to try. I imagine she failed at the waltzing as I have done at the regeneration business. In speaking of Mr. Crane, I, as one of his labourers, must pay a deserved tribute to his goodness of heart, to his uprightness, to his fine tact and kindness towards us, and I shall compensate him for his earnest labour on our behalf, and his disappointment at the failure which has followed it.

"Pardon me if I consider you a lot of mugs, which was a phrase I heard used by one of you regarding the authorities here. I confess I thought I'd find one, at least, among the forty who would, as time went on, make some remark more worth listening to than the braying of a donkey; but I admit that you don't interest me, and I care not a copper—don't start; I'm making no reference to the police—whether you're regenerated or not. As it is impossible for me to describe adequately my contempt for you, I shall give up trying. It is probable that if you'd been taken young—say, between the ages of six and ten—something might have been made of you, and I believe any hopeful Government that addresses itself to this question will abandon the bettering of adult incompetents, and turn its energies towards setting the youth of our land in the right path.

"Now, Blake," said Stranleigh, turning to the secretary, "did you put the pound a day in envelopes, as I ordered?"

"Yes, my lord."

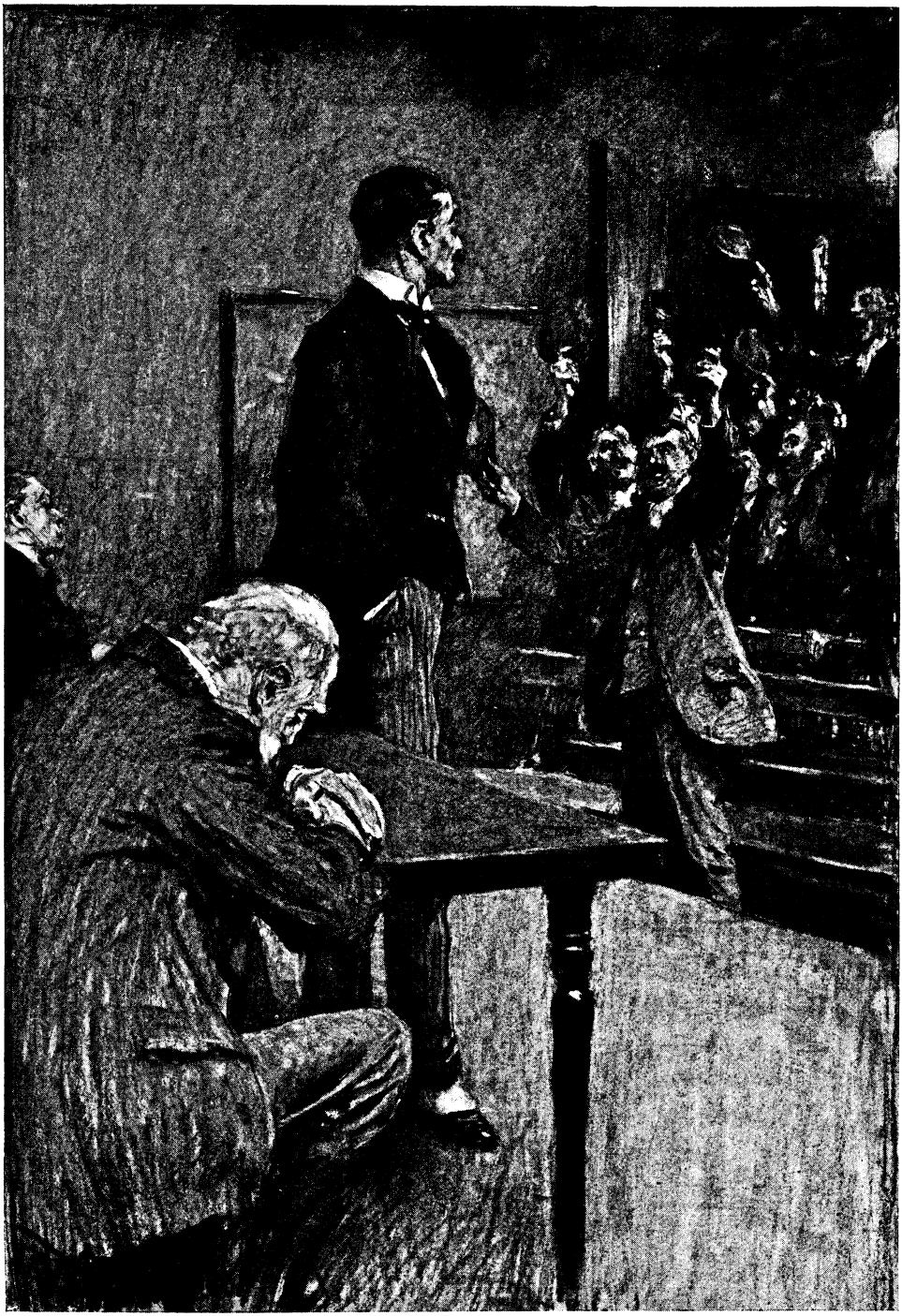
"Then it would be rather a pity to tear them all open again, and since I've had the pleasure of telling these gentlemen what I think of them, I propose that we leave their compensation at the figure I first intended. You'd better go now."

Blake, rising, took with him a stout, well-filled hand-bag, and disappeared. A moment later the purr of a departing automobile was heard.

"Now, gentlemen, a very few words more, and I bespeak your serious attention. Within an hour you will be in possession of more money than any of you ever received at one time. It is perhaps foolish to make this donation, which every man before me knows he does not deserve, but if it enables you to get jobs, I shall be very glad. It will doubtless lead some of you a little faster on the road to destruction. That I cannot prevent, but I give you a final warning. The road from here to the station is direct. A fast walker may do the trick in thirty-seven minutes. Blake will wait at the station for a quarter of an hour only, and there will hand to each man a packet, containing five-pound notes and some gold; so, if you want the money, you have no time to lose."

"We can't get there in a quarter of an hour!" cried Harrison.

"Thank you, Bert, for calling my attention to the turgidness of my language. Blake has reached the station by this time. He knows the moment at which you will start from this building, and will allow thirty-seven minutes to elapse, then wait a quarter of an hour longer. We are connected by telephone with the station, so if you do any damage before leaving, as you threatened Mr. Crane, you will pay very dearly for it, and you won't have time to make any depredations on the road." Stranleigh pulled out



"The cheers were given with a will."

his watch. "The foot-race will begin two minutes from now."

Every man sprang to his feet, and there seemed the likelihood of a stampede, but Stranleigh held up his hand.

"It is useless attempting to leave prematurely. The doors are locked, and you cannot break them down in two minutes; but even if you did, I'd telephone to Blake, and he and the money would vanish. The doors are to be opened at the exact moment by my friend, the gardener, and I am sure he will watch your retreat with more joy than if he were witnessing the most exciting Marathon race the world ever saw."

The gardener, at a nod from Stranleigh, rose and went to the door.

"Patience, gentlemen," Stranleigh added to the uneasy crowd. "Just one minute more."

"I say, mates," shouted Harrison, "three cheers for his ludship!"

The cheers were given with a will, deafening in their volume in that restricted hall. As they ceased, the rattling of chains betokened the opening of a door, and the crowd surged forward.

"Wait a bit, lads! Three more cheers for 'Longbeard' and the gardener!"

These were given as Stillson Crane's head sunk in his hands.

"And now, you scum of the earth," roared Harrison, "file out like soldiers and get in line! No man move till I give the word."

The men obeyed him. Stranleigh and Crane followed them to the door.

"One, two, three—go!" cried Harrison, and away they went in a body, never noticing there were no police about the building.

"By George," said Stranleigh, "I am still in doubt about those men."

"It needs one of themselves," said Crane, "like that man Harrison. *He* should have been superintendent."

"No one could have done his duty better than you, Mr. Crane," said Stranleigh, placing his hand affectionately on the shoulder of his former manager.

A further episode in the eventful career of Lord Stranleigh, Philanthropist, will appear in the next Number.

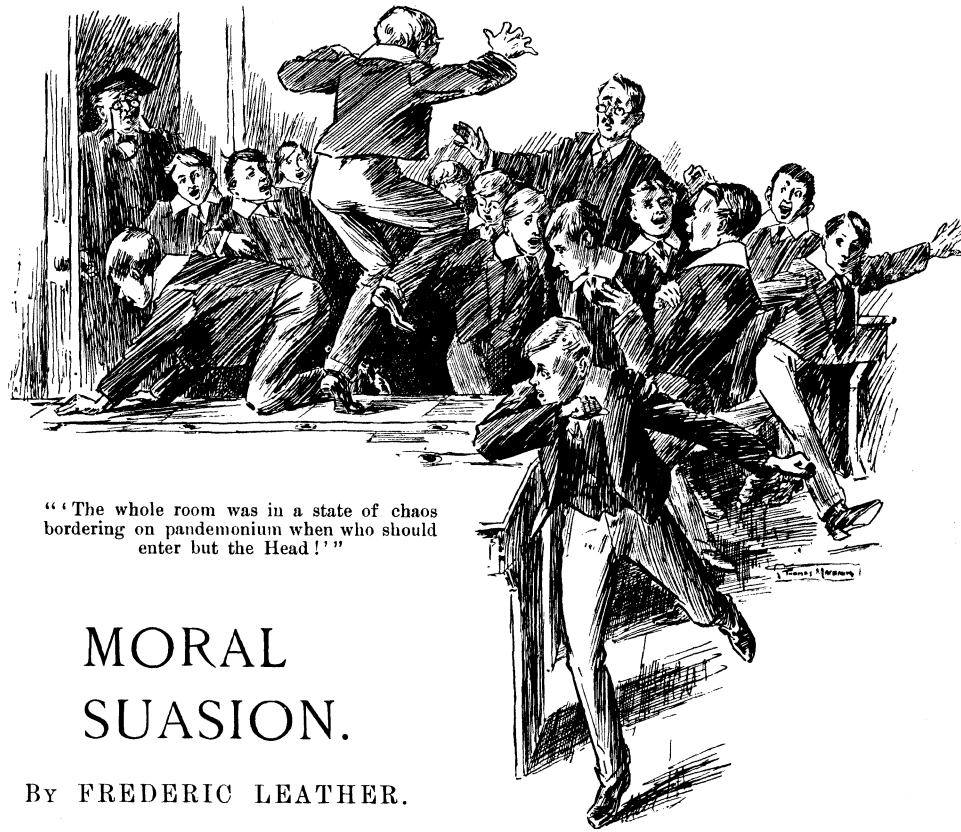
TAKE DAFFODIL FOR LOVE THAT'S TRUE.

TAKE daffodil for love that's true,
Let daffodil bind me and you,
For he's an honest, kindly fellow,
In smock of plainest yellow.
He stands for all that's glad and free—
Let daffodil bind you and me.

Take daffodil for love that's kind,
For daffodil braves storm and wind,
While on his face the sun, enholden,
Still glistens yellow-golden.
He speaks of love through wind and weather—
Let daffodil bind us together.

Let daffodil bind me and you,
For daffodil is staunch and true;
There's many a flower has greater grace,
Less sunshine in its face.
Let poets sing the rose's beauty still,
But you and I choose honest daffodil.

AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON.



"'The whole room was in a state of chaos bordering on pandemonium when who should enter but the Head!'"

MORAL SUASION.

By FREDERIC LEATHER.

SMITHSON is a firm believer in moral suasion. He is also a schoolmaster. So am I. Our joint telegraphic address, registered, is "Heaven-help-us, Mudford."

The world knows nothing of its greatest men, and the halfpenny papers never mention Smithson. Nevertheless, he exists. Why, no one quite knows. Nature, like Jove, occasionally nods: possibly he has his purpose, like the earthworm.

If ever you come to Mudford, gaze upon the Grammar School. It stands where it has stood for three hundred years, its avowed object all the time being "to teach the young idea to shoot." It does—in fact, Smithson does it very successfully. The young's idea is to shoot at him with paper pellets—*papier mâché* primitively prepared by long chewing in the mouth. They usually hit him.

Smithson's short-sighted, so seldom spots the marksman. It wouldn't much matter if he did; he would only "reason" with him. Reasoning with the young is Smithson's *forte*. He studies large books on logic to help him; they read "penny bloods," and floor him every time.

Smithson and I are "resident"—in other words, we live in the school—and are expected to be always "on duty." In return, we receive, between us, one hundred and thirty pounds a year.

Smithson was born a "good boy." The Fairchild family, and other infant prodigies of virtue of the "die young" type, were never in it with him. He has survived, and, now that he's turned thirty, his chief holiday hobby is local preaching.

His pupils appreciate his virtue fully—and presume upon it. The paths of the righteous, in the scholastic profession, were ever hard and stony.

Curiously enough, Smithson always confides his cares to me, perhaps because I listen to him, while the other men on the "staff" only laugh. I laugh after he's gone, and more loudly.

The other night he came to my room—by virtue of seniority, I have one to myself, the other four holding one in common—overwhelmed by a "sea of troubles." Knocking discreetly, he awaited the words "Come in!" to enter, then, advancing timidly, he smiled sweetly, though sheepishly, and said:

"Are you working, old man? May I come in?"

"No," I replied—"that is, yes, certainly. Have a smoke?"

We always ask him to smoke because he invariably answers: "No, thanks, old man. It's awf'ly decent of you, all the same." And often he adds confidentially: "It's the only vice I haven't got;" for *tête-à-tête* he talks at times as though he took a delight in daily demolishing the Decalogue. As a matter of fact, his only weakness is a passion for strong tea, which he consumes in alarming quantities at all hours of the day and night.

He took a seat in his usual way, selecting the least comfortable chair, and sitting on it with an air of abject apology. For a short time he was silent, while I smoked. At length he coughed thrice and stammered—

"Er—hem! Do you mind giving me your advice and, perhaps, later, your help in overcoming a little difficulty of disciplinary trouble?"

(I ought to mention that Smithson only entered the scholastic profession this term. An only son, his parents handicapped him at the outset by naming him "John Wesley." Afterwards they attempted to atone for it by spending vast sums on educating him to be an electrical engineer. But, in the end, John Wesley discovered that he had a call—to teach unwilling school-boys the elements of mathematics—so he took the B.A. degree of London University, after much preliminary tuition by post, and enlisted in the noble army of schoolmaster martyrs. For martyrdom he is doubtless eminently qualified; in schoolmasterdom he has still everything to learn, for "boy"—human or inhuman—is to him a sealed book, a problem without possibility of solution.)

"Fire away!" I said, in answer to his appeal. "What's the trouble now? Not our friend Laidlaw, I hope?"

"Ah, yes, I fear, alas, that it is! He's really awf'ly decent, don't you know, but a little thoughtless and—er—inconsiderate at times."

"And what's he been up to this time?" I asked.

"Well, this afternoon, you know, I was engaged in the correction of a mathematical exercise of his in class, standing by his desk the while to point out the errata, when I chanced to cast a glance in the direction of his inner breast-pocket. The sight that met my eyes gave me such a shock that even now I scarce can bring myself to speak of it." His voice broke painfully.

"Cheer up," I said, "and pull yourself together. Let's hear the worst."

Dropping his voice to a hoarse whisper, he went on—

"It was a *ferret*—a yellow-haired ferret—its evil pink eyes peeping from out its possessor's pocket. For a time I was too agitated for words, for I may explain that I have had an intense loathing and horror for the creatures ever since one nearly bit me as a child. Recovering my composure with an effort, I gasped: 'What's that?' '*That?* Oh, that's a nine, sir!' the boy answered, imagining, doubtless, that I was alluding to his sum. 'No, no!' I cried. 'That—that thing in your pocket?' Glancing down, he answered: 'Oh, that's Bill Bailey, sir! Would you like to stroke him? He's awfully tame, sir.'"

"'Put it away at once!' I screamed. 'How dare you?'"

"Misunderstanding my instructions, he placed the dreadful creature on the floor."

Smithson paused dramatically. Suppressing a smile, I said—

"What happened next?"

"Well, naturally, my pupils were alarmed, and they sought safety by clambering on their desks. The whole room was in a state of chaos bordering on pandemonium when who should enter but the Head!"

"And did he spot the source of the mischief—the *fons et origo mali?*" I asked.

"I think not, for he just said to me in a stern voice: 'Is anything the matter, Mr. Smithson?' My nervous agitation was so extreme that for some seconds I was unable to utter a syllable. Noticing my agitation, Laidlaw held up his hand and said: 'It was only a mouse, sir. It ran across the floor, sir, and frightened us, sir.'"

"And did the Head swallow it—that is, the story, not the mouse?"

"Ah, yes, but he bade the whole class decline for him one thousand times, Latin and English, '*Ridiculus mus*,' and bring it to his study to-morrow. Then, before I could offer a word of explanation, he closed the door and withdrew."

"And what did the rest of the form think of their punishment?" I asked.

"Well, when at length the culprit had been captured and restored to its owner's pocket, they became indignant, and, after some argument, they convinced me of the unfairness of the penalty. As you know, it is my constant endeavour to hold evenly with my pupils the scales of justice, so finally I promised to endeavour to relieve them of their burden."

"Good Heavens," I laughed, "you surely don't mean to say that you agreed to do the impositions for them? So that's why you want my help. Let's see, how does it go? '*Ridiculus mus, ridiculum mum.*'"

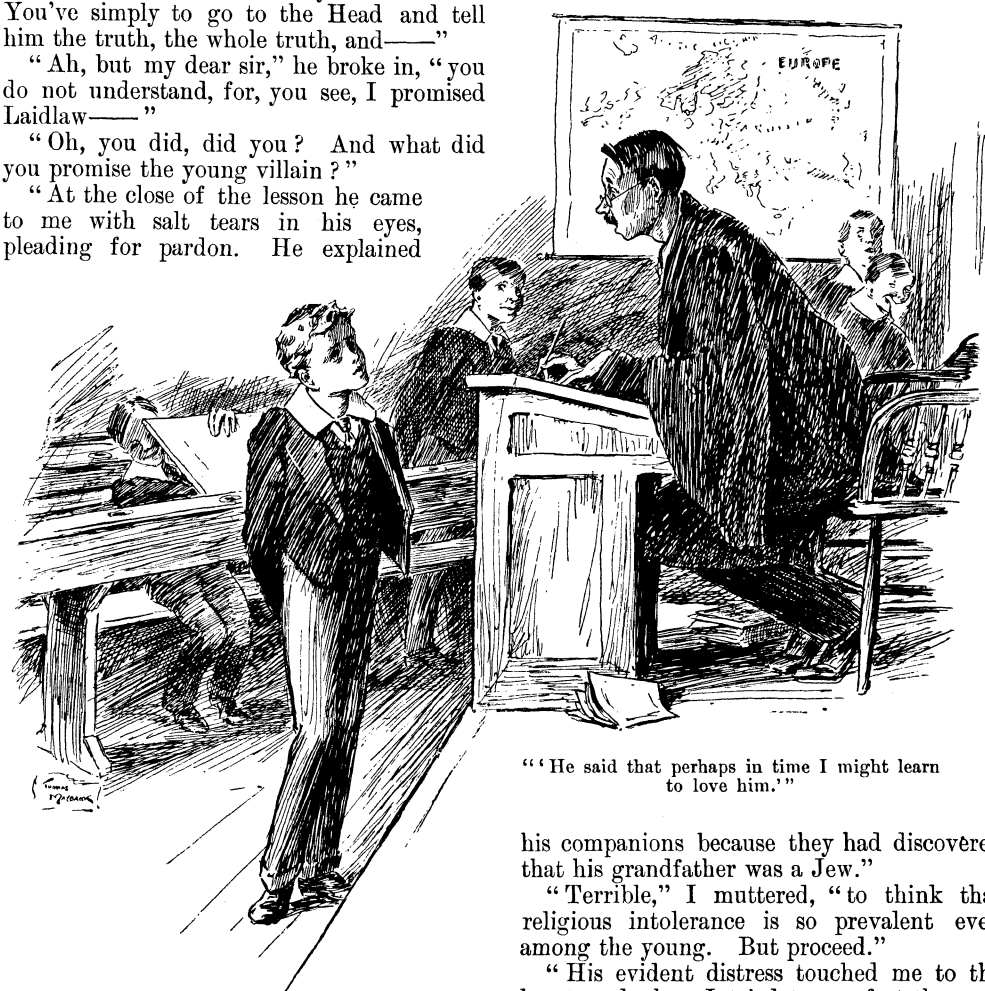
"Ah, not so—indeed, forsooth! I merely came to you, as a friend, to seek for help in my time of trouble, trusting that you might, perchance, suggest some way out of the difficulty."

"Well," I said, "the remedy seems obvious. You've simply to go to the Head and tell him the truth, the whole truth, and——"

"Ah, but my dear sir," he broke in, "you do not understand, for, you see, I promised Laidlaw——"

"Oh, you did, did you? And what did you promise the young villain?"

"At the close of the lesson he came to me with salt tears in his eyes, pleading for pardon. He explained



"'He said that perhaps in time I might learn to love him.'"

that Billy was his only friend, that he fed from his hand and shared his couch each night. His appeal moved me deeply, for he went on to tell of how he was misunderstood by his companions and masters, and that Billy was the only living creature who really loved and understood him."

(As a matter of fact, Charles Gordon Laidlaw is a bright-eyed young sinner of thirteen, with light curly hair—sure sign of youthful villainy—and a perpetual merry smile, whose high spirits and genius for mischief make him universally worshipped by his schoolfellows.)

"Ah, he said that, did he? Anything else?"

"Yes, and this is the most pathetic part of all. He said that he was persecuted by his companions because they had discovered that his grandfather was a Jew."

"Terrible," I muttered, "to think that religious intolerance is so prevalent even among the young. But proceed."

"His evident distress touched me to the heart, and when I tried to comfort the poor little chap, he burst into tears, and said that I had always been his favourite master, and that perhaps in time I might learn to love him."

"And did you?" I asked.

"Ah, well, I began to see that there is good—much good—in the boy. Beneath a thoughtless and irresponsible exterior lies hid, believe me, a heart of purest gold."

Smithson's eyes grew moist, and he paused to wipe his glasses with his handkerchief.

It was too much ; I couldn't keep back a laugh, which was the louder for its having been so long restrained.

"What did you say ?" he asked in tones of mild surprise.

"Nothing," I answered truthfully ; "I was merely thinking."

"Yes, do—do, I beseech you, think of a way out of my dilemma. You cannot understand how the affair has disturbed me. I am convinced that I shall not sleep a wink to-night."

"I can quite believe it, with all those *Ridiculus mus*—or is it *mus-es?*—on your mind. However, the Head's out, and won't be back till late, so failing the 'star' turn, we'll have to fall back on the 'juvenile lead.'"

"What do you mean ?" asked Smithson.

"Why, Master Laidlaw himself, and none other. The young rascal should be in his dormitory, supposedly sleeping the sleep of the just, but more probably pillow-fighting. Fetch him here.

"What—me? But I don't understand——"

"Oh, it's quite simple," I said. "Just go to his dormitory—Number Four, I think—and tell him I want to see him at once."

"But—but supposing he won't come ?"

"'But' me no 'buts,'" I cried, "but go."

He went, and shortly returned, followed by his young tormentor, wearing pink-and-blue pyjamas and a puzzled smile on his ruddy countenance.

"Do you want to see me, sir ?" he inquired innocently.

"Yes," I answered. "But, first of all, do you mind bending down for a moment ?"

Without a word, as though mechanically, he did so, the while I administered nine hearty smacks with a handy slipper from behind.

"Do you know what that's for ?" I asked, the operation over.

"No, sir," was the answer, in a voice quivering with righteous indignation and outraged innocency. "What, sir ?"

"Perhaps Mr. Smithson might help you to guess—or Bill Bailey."

"Oh, that, sir! But Mr. Smithson promised he wouldn't sneak and get Bill Bailey into a row, and very likely killed."

"Don't misjudge me, my dear boy," broke in Mr. Smithson. "I merely mentioned the matter to my colleague in strict professional secrecy. Nothing was further from my thoughts than to incriminate you in any way."

Laidlaw glanced at him more in sorrow than in anger at the thought of trust betrayed by one who had called him friend.

"It's all right," I remarked. "Mr. Smithson didn't 'sneak,' as you express it. He just came to me for help, and to ask my advice as to how to relieve your form of twenty-one thousand *Ridiculus mus-es*."

"Well, I offered to do the lot, sir, because I know it was all my fault ; but, still——"

"What's your opinion of Moral Suasion, Laidlaw ?" I interrupted.

"Moral who, sir ? I don't think I know him, sir. Is it anyone at school ?"

"No, not exactly—that is, he's a friend of Mr. Smithson's."

"Oh !" Laidlaw looked and spoke as though he had no wish to know anything of Smithson's friends.

"Moral Suasion," I went on, "disagrees with King Solomon, who, as you know, stated that to spare the rod is to spoil the school-boy. Moral Suasion, on the other hand, contends that kind words are more than cruel blows, and simple faith—in school-boy virtue—than shedding blood. Do you follow me ?"

"No, sir," was the candid answer.

"Good. Well, to put it in another way, Mr. Smithson believes in curing cheek by kindness, impudence by soothing words. You are a bit cheeky at times, perhaps even impudent, aren't you ?"

"No, no !" broke in Smithson hotly. "Merely a little thoughtless and inconsiderate at times."

"Exactly ; and sometimes your—er—thoughtlessness is the cause of a good deal of anxious thought for others. Bringing a ferret into school, for instance, and letting it peep out at awkward moments, is a little—well, we won't say cheeky, but inconsiderate, isn't it ?"

"I couldn't help it, sir, really. Billy had been sound asleep and snoring all the afternoon, and then he just happened to wake. I didn't ask him to."

"No," I said, "don't put *all* the blame on poor Billy. No doubt he is a very well-behaved ferret, but there were other things before Billy, weren't there ? It wasn't the first time you've been 'inconsiderate' to Mr. Smithson, was it ?"

"Well, not quite, sir," he stammered.

"Let's hear all about it, then, if Mr. Smithson doesn't mind. Fire away and tell us how it started."

"I don't remember exactly, sir, but one day, when Mr. Smithson hadn't been here

long, a silly ass sitting next me bet me twopence that I wouldn't stick a pin into him when he was standing in front of me, so I did, and he never paid."

"Your 'he's' and 'him's' are a little mixed, I'm afraid, but I presume that you mean that the pin was stuck in Mr. Smithson. What did he say?"

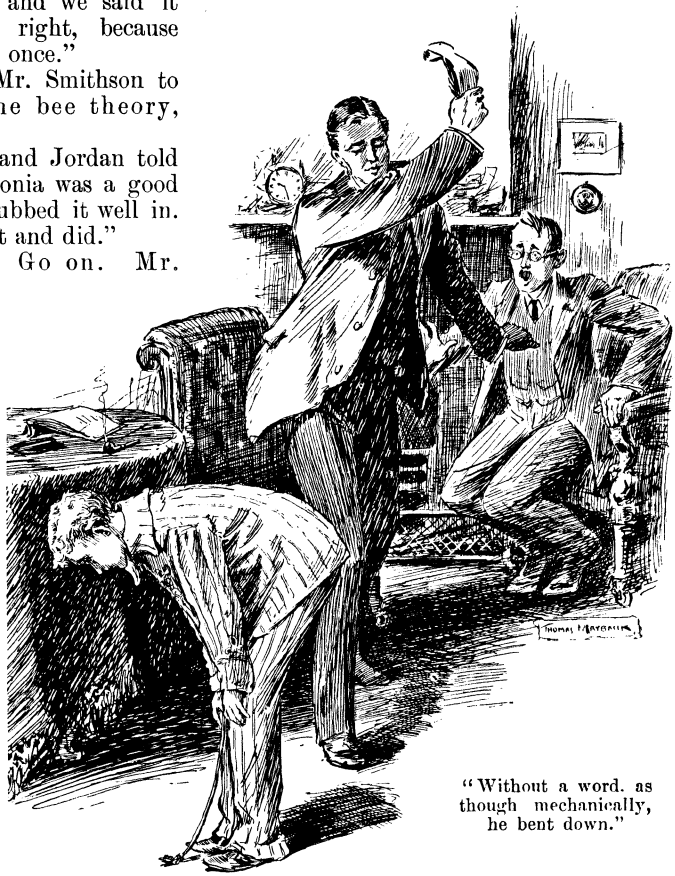
"Oh, he yelled, sir, and said: 'What the——' So I told him that it must have been a bee that had been buzzing round all the afternoon, and we said it would be all right, because bees only sting once."

"You got Mr. Smithson to believe in the bee theory, then?"

"Oh, yes; and Jordan told him that ammonia was a good thing if you rubbed it well in. So he went out and did."

"Did he? Go on. Mr. Smithson, no doubt, won't mind hearing about other examples of your 'thoughtlessness' while you are about it."

"Well, one afternoon it was a bit dark in school, and I happened to have a candle in my pocket, so I put it on the desk and lit it."



"Without a word, as though mechanically, he bent down."

"And Mr. Smithson liked that, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir. He just said: 'Why this illumination, Laidlaw?' And all the chaps laughed, and I told him that I thought I would throw a little light on the subject, as I couldn't see how to do the sum I was doing."

"It sounds rather Irish," I said, "but proceed."

"Well, another time a chap dared me to cut old Wesley's—I mean, Mr. Smithson's—braces in school, when he was bending down just in front of me. So I did, and he didn't seem to mind, and never told the Head or anything, so I thought——"

"Oh, so you cut his braces, did you. A curious amusement, wasn't it?"

Smithson blushed and stammered: "Not at all—not at all. A mere misadventure, I feel sure. Doubtless his knife slipped, or——"

"An unfortunate slip! So you thought Mr. Smithson enjoyed having his braces cut, I presume?"

"Well, sir, when he found out, he just went out of the room with his hands in his pockets, and came back and said nothing about it."

"Anything more to confess?" I asked.

"I don't remember, sir. You see, he's always jolly decent in school, and let's us 'rag' a bit, so long as we don't kick up too much row, because he says he wants us to thoroughly enjoy his lessons. Don't you, sir?"

He turned to Mr. Smithson as though for confirmation, but, receiving no reply, he resumed.

"Besides, sir, you know we all like him awfully, and we would never do anything *really* rotten. There was a cad once knocked a bottle of red ink right over his pants—I mean trousers, sir—on purpose, and we were all jolly sick, because they were a new pair. But Mr. Smithson only smiled and said: 'Oh, don't apologise; it will soon come out.' But

I don't think it did, because he never wore them again, and we wanted to subscribe and get him some more instead."

"But surely you got punished for your misdeeds at times?" I said.

"No, sir, because you see, sir, Mr. Smithson doesn't believe in punishing. He told us about it when he first came, and read a lot out of a big book all about what is called corporal's punishment. I didn't understand much of it, but it said that caning was decaying——"

"Degrading?" I suggested.

"Yes, de—de—what you said, sir—and Mr. Smithson said he would rather die than strike a boy in anger, sir; and he told us he wanted to make our lessons *really* interesting, and asked us to help him."

"Did you?"

"Well, we all thought mathematics was rather dry sort of rot, so one day I took him a round robin signed by all the form, except Kidson—who's an awful swot, and keen on maths—saying we thought a little singing some hours would liven things up a bit; and we said we knew he had a ripping voice, because we had heard him in church."

"Did the concerts come off?"

"No, he wouldn't sing, because he said he didn't think the Headmaster would quite like it, but sometimes he used to tell us fairy tales and read chapters out of 'Eric' instead."

"You liked that, I suppose?"

"No, not much, because we all thought 'Eric' was mostly rather rot, though interesting in parts. We didn't listen much, though, as a rule, but just——"

"Look here," I broke in, "it strikes me it's time you went to bed. To-morrow you are going to show that you appreciate all Mr. Smithson's kindness by going to the Head and owning up everything about Billy."

Laidlaw looked glum, and didn't speak.

"It will mean a good healthy licking, I know—but you're pretty tough by now—and a 'jaw,' but you don't mind that, do you?"

"No, sir, but it's beastly bad luck on old Billy. He'll have to be killed, won't he, sir?" said Laidlaw at length, with a break in his voice.

"Oh, no," said Smithson; "*I*'ll look after him, if you'll only let me. I'm sure he will be happy in my care."

"Perhaps we had better leave Billy to the tender mercies of the Headmaster," I remarked.

"At any rate, Laidlaw, you'll own up like a true Jew, won't you?"

"Jew, sir! What do you mean? Who's a Jew, sir?"

"I understood Mr. Smithson to say that you were, and persecuted in consequence. Aren't you?"

Laidlaw tried not to smile, but failed, so I continued—

"You'll go like a decent Christian, then?"

"Yes, sir, but I know Billy will get into a beastly row. Good night, sir!"

"Good night!"

"Good night, Laidlaw!" ventured Smithson timidly.

"Good night, sir!" was the cordial reply. Then, turning, Laidlaw stammered: "I'm really *awfully* sorry, sir."

* * * * *

"What price moral suasion now?" I gasped, when he had gone. "Are you still a believer in its virtues?"

For some time Smithson did not answer. At last he muttered: "Occasionally, perchance it may fail, but in principle——"

"Never drag in principle when you start schoolmastering; the two don't mix. Strike first—from the shoulder—then think of principle."

"But," Smithson stammered, "my mother always taught me that a blow delivered in anger was a grievous sin."

"No; strike not in anger, but in anguish. A blow in time saves nine. Besides, remember that, rightly used, the tongue is mightier than the hand. But, above all, give up reasoning."

Smithson looked at his watch and said: "I see it's past ten o'clock, so I must retire to my couch. Thanks awf'ly! I'm really tremendously grateful for your help."

"Don't mention it. Good night!"

"Good night, old man, and thanks awf'ly! It's really fearfully good of you."

* * * * *

Laidlaw confessed. He found it, we'll hope, good for the soul, if less beneficial to other parts of his anatomy.

Of course, Smithson had to clear up matters with the Head. Acting on the latter's advice, he has decided to return to electrical engineering. It is to be hoped that he will find dynamos easier to understand and to manage than school-boys.

A few minutes since, I met Laidlaw coming in from football, and asked him how he was getting on with his form-master.

"Oh, he's bucked up tremendously lately," was the answer, "and we don't 'rot' him half as much. But *who* is Moral Suasion, sir?"

I didn't attempt to enlighten him further.

A MAN IS OF USE—SOMETIMES.

By JENNINGS HUITE.

"MY goodness, Jim, you do look glum! Whatever is the matter with you?"

"I've got something — something very particular—to say to you, Nell."

"Well, if keeping it in makes you look like that, for pity's sake get it off your mind, and let's talk cheerfully. You're enough to give anyone the blues these days!"

Jim Naylor looked wistfully at his companion. He was only a mechanic, and he felt himself unspeakably her inferior. For she was pretty and dressed well, and earned her own living, and behaved inconsequentially, after the manner of some girls, and seemed as though she had no heart. Whereas poor Jim was troubled with a very big one, and being only an honest, straightforward, clean-minded young man, whose whole thoughts and time, until a few weeks previously, had been fully occupied by his daily work, he had had no leisure for the study of psychology, especially that most complex and fascinating form of it—a woman's kaleidoscopic moods and reasoned unreasonableness. What should he, poor simpleton, know of the innate perverseness which will lead a woman to say "No," when her whole being is quivering for the aftermath of "Yes," or to harass, to the verge of desperation, the one man whose arms she is aching to feel clasped around her?

So it was only natural that he should hesitate, still smarting as he was from the rasping of her biting tongue.

"Well?"—half defiantly, half in mockery.

Suddenly Jim took his courage in both hands, and, with characteristic directness, came straight to the point.

"Nell," he blurted out, a flush of dull brick red overspreading his handsome, troubled face—"Nell, will you marry me?"

A hearty peal of laughter was his only response, and it stung him like a whip. Had he been less unsuspecting, more versed in the ways of the world—or of women, which is much the same thing, after all—he might have noticed that the laughter was just a trifle forced, bordering closely on tears, and have caught the quick, involuntary gleam of intense joy which lit up the girl's whole countenance as he asked the question. But he was labouring under intense emotion, and had not dared to look at her as he spoke the fateful words. When he did—and it was from a little distance, for at the sound of her laugh he had stepped backwards as if struck—the glow had gone, and pure, unadulterated mischief, which he mistook for amusement, had taken its place.

"My word, Jim," she gurgled, when at last she was able, or judged that the time had come, to speak, "aren't you funny?"

He clenched his hands, driving the nails into the hard flesh.

"You won't?" he asked doggedly.

"I didn't say so, did I?" she retorted. She was enjoying herself thoroughly.

"Then will you?"

"I'll think about it."

"That's not good enough!" he cried, strong emotion giving the tones a ring of what she mistook for impatience and resolved to punish as such. "It's got to be 'Yes' or 'No' right here and now."

"Oh, indeed! Then, in that case"—she was in her element now; he, poor wretch, hung on her lips as if she had been a judge pronouncing sentence—"no!"

"Very well, then. Good-bye!"

"Good night, Jim!"

His perceptions were quick enough this time to catch the perceptible softening of her tone, and he turned back, his face once more aglow. But her heart hardened again and she turned coolly away. "See you to-morrow night?" she queried, over her shoulder.

But he vouchsafed no reply, and in another second he was gone.

* * * * *

The offices of Breitmayer and Colson were a model of up-to-dateness. Method—in the most advanced American interpretation of the word—was their keynote; system, the dominant. Their card-index system was ingenious to the verge of complication, but

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only to the verge. When you understood it, it was the most perfect system ever devised. But woe betide the unfortunate clerk who put a card back in its wrong place. He would have no opportunity of making such an unpardonable mistake a second time.

Everything in the office moved as though by clockwork, including the *employés*, of whom there were about fifty, of all ages and both sexes. Needless to add that punctuality was an axiom—punctuality, that is, in such matters as the time of arrival in the morning, and the exact minute of returning from lunch. But with a consideration for their subordinates which, however, was not appreciated as much as it doubtless should have been, the partners relaxed their strictness in this particular during the latter portion of the day; and realising, no doubt, that it was unreasonable to expect the same scrupulous exactitude after a long day's work as at its start, they were less insistent on punctuality towards six o'clock. Indeed, persistent punctuality in departure had been known, in more than one case, to act as a decided bar to promotion in either status or emoluments.

Work began sharp at 9 a.m. Not only were the clerks required to be in the office by then, but at their desks or typewriters, ready to start work as the clock struck.

"I've no use for a stenographer who spends the first quarter of an hour each day manicuring her nails," Mr. Breitmayer—who, to give him his due, set his subordinates a splendid example in regularity of arrival as well as in many other respects—had been heard to remark.

"But surely you would rather they should do that than have dirty finger-nails?" someone had once objected.

"Any clerk coming to my office with dirty fingers," was the reply, "would have the whole of that day, and the next, and all the rest, as far as I was concerned, in which to improve the appearance of her hands."

And the staff knew it, and profited by the knowledge.

It was ten minutes to nine on the morning after Jim Naylor's proposal to her when Nellie Williams entered the palatial suite of buildings of which Breitmayer and Colson occupied the entire first floor. Just at the foot of the stairs she overtook her friend and colleague, Muriel Green.

"Hullo, Nell, is that you?" was the latter's well-meant if somewhat unoriginal greeting.

"Seems as though you knew it was," was the none too good-humoured retort.

Muriel eyed her in surprise.

"Why, whatever's the matter, dear? Got out of bed the wrong side this morning?"

"If I did, I got out the side I'd left my hair-net overnight!" snapped Nell.

"Oh, Nell, you know I can't help my hair being like that!" There was a note of reproach in the reply, for this was a sore point with Muriel, who had a mass of wayward reddish hair, which no amount of disciplinary measures would ever keep tidy for more than ten minutes.

But Nell was in no humour to consider others' feelings this morning.

"It's a wonder to me Mr. Breitmayer has never spoken to you about it," she continued maliciously. "But perhaps he admires red hair."

Muriel's eyes filled with tears, for she was a sensitive girl where her affections were concerned, and Nell was her dearest friend. She had never known her like this before. As a rule, she was so different—never very demonstrative, it is true, but genuine and loyal to the core.

The two girls entered the office in silence, and ten minutes later were "tic-tacking" away at their machines as though their lives depended on the pace at which the "carriage" travelled backwards and forwards.

The morning passed uneventfully. First one and then the other was summoned—one ring, Miss Cooke; two, Miss Smith; three, Miss Williams; and so on. Hurriedly snatching note-book and pencil, each in turn glided off, after giving a last pat to her hair, to some private office to "take down," returning half an hour later with a sheaf of papers and several pages of shorthand. Then followed more frantic onslaughts on the keyboard, more "tic-tac-tic-tac-tic," like some noisy telegraphic instrument, while all the time the "finished letter" baskets grew more and more full, until the boys came round to collect them for signature. And so it went on ceaselessly, in one eternal round, the monotony of it only varied by the subjects of the letters which were reeled off in such tiresome regularity.

Muriel had purposely avoided Nell at lunch-time, and hurried off by herself. She was therefore the more pleased when the latter joined her at their usual table at the tea-shop.

"I'm sorry I was 'ratty' this morning, dear," Nell whispered, after she had given her order to the waitress.

Muriel's wounded pride fell from her in an instant.



"'You don't seem to consider that *employés* have any feelings.'"

"What's the matter?" she asked in tones of genuine concern. "You're looking fagged out. Has he been beastly to you this morning?"

"He" was Mr. Colson, the junior partner, a young gentleman who was a thorn in Mr. Breitmayer's side, and only tolerated at the office because of family influence, which was of too much practical value in other directions to be denied in this.

"No, not to-day; but I'm just about sick of it all," answered Nell bitterly, "and I'm going to chuck it!"

"Can you afford it?" was Muriel's practical reply. "It isn't so easy to get a new berth nowadays, you know."

"I've got a few pounds in the Savings Bank," answered Nell—"enough to tide over a few weeks' leisure."

"Well, dear, you know best. But I don't know what I shall do when you're gone—if you are really bent on going."

The two girls ate their meal in silence for some time, each occupied with her own thoughts. It was Muriel who spoke first.

"When are you going to give notice?"

"I'm not going to," answered Nell; "I'm going to get sacked!"

Muriel looked at her in wide-eyed amazement, a piece of buttered scone poised half-way between plate and mouth.

"Nell, you—you can't!"

"Yes, I can, and, what's more, I will!" she answered impetuously. "Paid off, for choice. They aren't fond of clerks working out their notice."

"But they won't give you a reference, if you do that," urged Muriel the cautious, "and you'll never get another place without one."

"Oh, yes, I will, and a better place than Breitmayer and Colson's," replied her companion.

"But why," insisted the other—"why not give them notice yourself, if you want to leave?"

"Because I've some old scores to pay off, and intend to treat myself to the luxury of attending in person to discharge the debt," Nell answered bitterly, but with a tremor of deep excitement in her voice and manner. "It's quite time old Breitmayer found out that we're not all bits of clockwork, without feelings or humanity—mere slot-machines, into which he puts so many shillings a week, and out of which he extracts in exchange the maximum amount of concentrated energy. We're far too meek and mild, the whole lot of us. We take everything lying down, until we can't call our souls our own, much less our consciences!"

She paused in the rapid flow of her passionate protest.

"Anyhow, this worm has reached its turning-point," she concluded, as she picked up her gloves and docket, and prepared to leave the shop. "Are you coming for a turn before we get back?" she asked in gentler tones. "This place is like an oven. I can hardly breathe."

The two girls had scarcely settled down in their places, ready to start work again at two o'clock, when the electric bell in the typists' room rang three times. But no one stirred.

"Nell," whispered Muriel, "there's your bell!"

"I know it was," Nell replied coolly enough. But for all her coolness of speech, there was a flush on her cheeks and a gleam in her eyes which none of the other girls had ever seen there before.

"Aren't you going?"

"Presently." And she put a piece of paper in her typewriter and began another letter.

In a minute the bell rang again—three rather longer rings than usual, as though to convey the message that the person at the button-end of the wire had rung before.

But still Miss Williams continued her task, and not till a third summons in the shape of three angry peals, each one more protracted than its precursor, had sounded, did she rise from her chair, leisurely pick up her note-book, and proceed to the "governor's" room.

She found him sitting ominously upright in his chair, drumming impatiently on the table with his fingers.

"Are the bells out of order, Miss Williams?" he asked icily.

"Not that I am aware of," answered Nell.

"Then may I ask why it should be necessary for me to ring for you three times?"

Nell's courage somehow began to fail her.

"I—I was finishing a letter," she replied rather lamely. "I thought——"

But Mr. Breitmayer's icy accents cut in like a knife.

"You are employed here to obey orders, not to think," he interrupted.

The stern reproof, with its deliberately implied insult to her mental capacities, acted like a douche of cold water on the girl. It braced her for the ordeal to which she had determined to submit herself.

"Then, in that case, you had better engage

an automaton to do your stenography in future, Mr. Breitmayer," she replied, looking him straight in the face.

To be "answered back" in this coolly provocative manner by an *employé*—and a girl at that—was such an entirely new experience for Mr. Breitmayer that he was taken off his guard, and for a moment completely nonplussed. Nell saw her opportunity and profited by it.

"You don't seem to consider," she continued, speaking in clear, quick tones, and with rapidly heightening colour, "that *employés* have any feelings, that they ever feel tired, that they are worthy of a moment's consideration. You look upon us all as so many machines, without intelligence or ambition or——"

But her impassioned, useless protest was cut short at this point. Mr. Breitmayer's surprise had given place to fierce, uncontrollable anger, and he brought his fist down on the table with a bang that made poor Nell jump, and effectively dammed the fountains of her eloquence. But he quickly regained control of himself.

"That is quite sufficient, Miss Williams." The tone was even more cutting than before. "We make short work of female agitators in this office. If you will condescend so far as to walk to the cashier's office, he will pay you your salary to date, and an extra week in lieu of notice. And tell Miss Collins to come down, please. Not another word," he continued, seeing that Nell was about to say something more, "or I——"

What he would have done, however, Nell was not destined to know, for at that moment the door opened, and the junior partner entered. He had his hat on the back of his head, and the general appearance of having "lunched." The sight of him was sufficient for Nell in her present overwrought condition. She picked up her papers and beat a hasty and not altogether dignified retreat.

The junior partner dropped into the only comfortable chair in the room.

"Devilish pretty girl that!" he ejaculated.

"Devilish impertinent one!" was the response.

"Not been rowin' her, have you?"

"I have just had the infinite satisfaction of discharging her," Mr. Breitmayer informed him. He did not add that it would have afforded him even greater pleasure to mete out the same treatment to his present interlocutor.

"Well, I call it a beastly shame!" Mr. Colson told him, with an insouciance which made the other writhe inwardly, but which he was powerless to resent. "A deuced pretty girl!" ("Baiting" his colleague was one of Mr. Colson's favourite occupations, especially after lunch.) "What's she bin up to?"

This was more than Mr. Breitmayer could stand.

"Look here, Colson," he said angrily, "I've got work to do, if you haven't. If you're so interested in the girl, you'd better go and ask her yourself. She'll no doubt tell you a whole heap of——" He checked himself, for he prided himself on being a just man. "No," he continued, "she'll probably tell you the truth; I'll give her credit for that. The girl's honest enough—too honest for her own interests."

And it is highly probable that if Nell could have heard Mr. Breitmayer giving her that unsolicited testimonial, she would have apologised to him for the breach of discipline which had led to her dismissal.

But she didn't. After leaving the "governor's" office, she had returned to the typists' room. Muriel watched her enter.

"Well?" she asked in a whisper.

"I've done it!" Nell answered. But her lip was quivering; already the reaction had set in.

"Oh, Nell!" was all Muriel could find to say. But it was too much for Nell's forced composure, and she burst into tears. In an instant, careless of the consequences, her friend was at her side.

"Don't take it to heart, dear," she urged her. "You'll soon find another and a more comfortable berth."

"Oh, it's not that," Nell sobbed; "it's the way he spoke to me! I might have been a dog!"

But the breakdown did not last long. A quarter of an hour later she had collected her things, said "Good-bye" to her companions, drawn her money—for a moment she was tempted to forego it, but her common-sense showed her the folly as well as the utter uselessness of such a proceeding—and was on her way out of the office.

But just as she reached the outer door, she almost ran into the arms of an elderly gentleman who had just come in from the street.

It was the clergyman of the church she attended on Sundays, a friend of her dead parents—had Nell not been alone in the world, without near relations of any sort, she would possibly have been less independent—and she recognised him before he noticed

her. She would have liked to avoid speaking to him just then, for already her conscience was beginning to tell her that she had just done a very foolish thing, but escape was impossible.

"Why, Mr. Goodchild," she exclaimed, "whatever brings you Citywards?"

On seeing a lady approaching, he had turned back, to open the door for her, and had not recognised her just at first.

"Well, well," he answered, as soon as he saw who it was, "I hardly expected to meet you, Nellie. Not going home already, surely?"

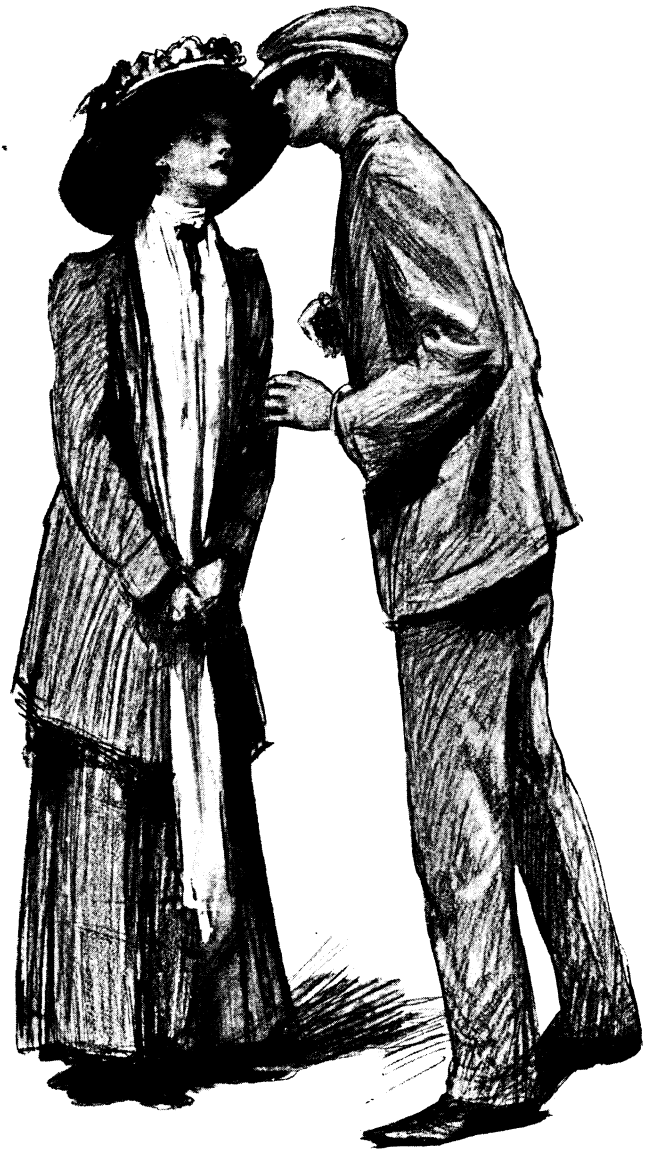
"Yes, I am," she answered, conscious of an aggravating rush of blood to her cheeks.

"Not ill, I hope?" he persisted.

There was no use beating about the bush. "Never better in my life," she replied. "The fact is, Mr. Goodchild, I've just got the sack."

"The what?"

"Just been discharged from my situation," she explained, smiling a little bitterly.



"'I've changed my mind, Jim, that's all. We'll get married just as soon as ever you like.'"

For a moment he was too taken aback to speak. He had known Nell all her life, and this was the last thing he ever expected to hear of her. Instinctively the word "discharged" suggested something not far removed from disgrace to his simple mind, and "disgrace" was a word he would never have connected with the girl before him. That she was apt to be a little headstrong, he knew, but he had always found her amenable to reason, and he knew nothing of the code of discipline which forbids employers to reason with refractory clerks.

"It's quite true," she added, with a rather poor attempt at bravado, as his silence began to become embarrassing. "You needn't look so scared about it, though; I haven't committed any crime."

He turned and walked by her side down the street.

"Tell me all about it," he said. "No doubt I can put matters right. I will call and see your employer, and intercede with him for you."

"Fat lot of good that would do!" was on the tip of Nell's quick tongue; but she checked herself in time, and merely answered: "It is very kind of you, Mr. Goodchild, but I am afraid that would be of no use. And nothing on earth would induce me to go back there again!" she added, firing up again at the recollection of the scene she had just passed through.

Her companion looked pained, but thought it better to hear the whole story before making any further suggestions. Bit by bit he got it out of her as they walked along. At first she was reluctant; her keen instinct scented opposition. Then gradually, as she rehearsed all the events of the past hour, it was more and more brought home to her that she had acted very foolishly—had been tilting at a windmill, in fact, and had merely succeeded in breaking her own lance. And the more she became convinced of this, the more she tried to make good her case to herself and her companion, and the more bitter and rebellious was her tone.

When she had finished, the clergyman was frankly shocked, as perhaps she had intended him to be. Unfortunately, however, he chose the wrong one of the two courses open to him, and instead of reasoning with her gently and kindly, he lectured her severely. The inevitable result was that Nell was more than ever confirmed in her obstinacy, and when, seeing the futility of further argument, he left her a few minutes later at a railway station, where he knew she could get a train home, they had almost reached an open rupture, and Nell was firmly convinced that she was a very ill-treated girl, and that the whole world was against her.

Later on, however, when looking back at the incident, Mr. Goodchild consoled himself with the reflection that perhaps, after all, he had been merely the blind instrument in the hands of a far-seeing Providence.

* * * * *

Three hours later Nell was waiting for Jim Naylor outside the "shop" where he worked. At six o'clock the "hooter" sounded, and instantly the men began trooping out. Naylor was one of the last. The expression on his face was not of the pleasantest, but Nell was too overwrought to notice either this or the sudden change from intense depression to joyful surprise which passed over it as he caught sight of her.

"Nell!" he almost shouted. Then he became conscious of his dirty overalls, and grew shy. "What are you doing here, of all places?" he asked her.

"Never mind that, Jim," she exclaimed. "I want you to do something for me."

"Give it a name, and it's done," he told her, his heart thumping hard for sheer delight.

She commenced speaking rapidly, walking by his side the while.

"Listen, now. I want you to take the next train to Valcaster. Do you understand that? Good! When you leave the station, walk quickly up to the Town Hall. Take three turns up and down the pavement from end to end, then wait on the steps. Do you follow that, Jim?"

"Yes," he answered, "though I——"

"Never mind," she interrupted; "you just get it well into your head. A man will come up to you and give you a note. Don't say anything, but just go where the note tells you to, and wait till a market cart comes along. You've got to stop that cart, and ask the driver if he's got the basket. If he says 'Yes,' get in and drive about two miles down the road until you come to a signpost. Then get out and wait."

"What'll the cart do?" asked practical Jim.

"The cart? Oh, you'll let that go on then," replied Nell. "But you've got to wait by that signpost—never mind how long. It may be half an hour, or it may be all night. You've got to wait till he comes."

Jim was evidently perplexed.

"Who?" he asked.

"A man in riding breeches and a felt hat," she told him. "He'll give you fresh instructions, which you must carry out to the letter. Then return to me. Now, are you quite sure just what you've got to do, Jim?"

"Yes," he answered, "I think I've got it all clear. I don't know what's up," he continued, "but since you want it done, I'll do it. That's good enough for me." He looked at his watch. "There's a train to Valcaster in three-quarters of an hour; that'll just give me time to wash and change my clothes. I must be off now."

He held out his hand to say "Good-bye," and turned rapidly down a side street. But he had not gone ten yards before she called him back.

"Jim!"

"I'll miss that train," he protested.

She looked at him with a glowing face as he hurried back to her.

"Never mind the train, Jim."

"Why, Nell, what do you mean?"

"I've changed my mind, Jim, that's all. We'll get married just as soon as ever you like."

MR. CALLAN'S ADVENTURE.

By EDWARD F. SPENCE.

MR. WILLIAM CALLAN—that is the name by which His Majesty became acquainted with him, indirectly—was an artist in his particular line. Indeed, he flattered himself that his craft had never been carried by anybody to such an exquisite pitch of perfection as by him. In the pursuit of it he had studied several sciences and more than one branch of art. In practical electricity he could have passed a stiff examination; his knowledge of metallurgy was substantial; he could have taught the Japanese something about explosives, and he knew several "wrinkles" in the methods of disguising identity temporarily that would have surprised some of our cleverest actors.

This is by no means an exhaustive account of his special knowledge, which, alas, was somewhat ill applied, for, to be plain, he was a burglar, but not a vulgar burglar, not one of those who "crack a crib" on mere chance, or a common fellow working with a gang in the suburbs. Indeed, he had no accomplices—at least, no voluntary accomplices. His identity puzzled the police and also those accommodating gentlemen whose methods of acquiring and selling portable property greatly interest the authorities. Proteus was monotonous compared with him; he never visited a "fence" twice in the same guise. There had been trouble in his life. During the early part of his professional career an accident beyond human calculation had caused him to become a reluctant guest of the Government for some years. After his release, with an excellent prison character, he was impolite enough to neglect to make the calls desired by the authorities in the case of ticket-of-leave men; and though they yearned for his society, they failed to leave their cards upon him. His life was lonely but lucrative. Sometimes he pined to discuss his plans and tell his triumphs, yet with an effort he forced himself to remain silent. Even the dear little woman who adorned his home had not the least idea that the large income which she strenuously helped to expend was ill acquired. His experience of the plank bed had made him cautious, so that his operations were few, very carefully calculated, and, as a rule, extremely remunerative.

On the night pertinent to this history, he was paying a call—unsolicited—at the private house of a foreign banker, by name Kislinski, whose nationality was unknown to the English police. Mr. Kislinski inhabited a big house near Barnes. His bank was in an alley off Cornhill, and the principal trade done at it consisted of mysterious dealings and marvellous bargains in Continental bills and notes, and "arbitrage" transactions which would have puzzled the ordinary financier. One of his clerks—whose acquaintance Mr. William Callan had made in a club at which the artist in felony was ashamed of being seen—fancied that the "guv'nor" was going wrong, although the books indicated prosperity. For the banker frequently took large amounts in specie or liquid assets home with him, and never brought them back, which, as the young man said, looked as if he were preparing for a bolt. He had ascertained, being an inquisitive fellow, that this very portable property was placed, for a time, at least, within a safe or strong-room in the basement of the house at Barnes.

On the all-important night Mr. Callan found himself in the basement, after an artistic entry and a swift examination of the queerly conducted house had assured him that his information was correct as to the movements of the household, and that he was alone in the building. He was a little surprised to notice that the chamber had something like the air of a board-room. However, he had no intention of wasting time, and after a hurried examination, to see whether it contained a second exit or a convenient hiding-place, he got out his tools, rather disappointed to find that the window had such strong bars that there was no chance of escape by it, unless he spent half an hour in cutting through two of them. As some compensation, there was a cupboard

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in which he might hide at a pinch, since, from the dusty inside, he guessed that it was rarely opened. Explosives were the principal feature of his tools, and his inspection of the safe—a very big safe—showed him, somewhat to his disgust, that it would be necessary to use them, for, of course, he preferred to work noiselessly.

His preparations were not quite finished when he heard a noise that few ears but his would have detected. He ran swiftly out of the room in his rubber-soled boots, which looked like ordinary patent leathers, and found to his horror that several people had entered the house. So he went back noiselessly, and began to collect the tools and consider the best policy. By the time that he had got them together, he heard that the people were coming down the stairs, so it was necessary to hide, since there was no time to get out. In a second or two he was inside the cupboard. Mental reckoning showed him



"'What are you?'"

—for he was a methodical man—that none of the tools were left in the room. People entered, the first of them switching on the electric light as he came in. There were eight. Through a crack in the cupboard he could see them indistinctly, and make out that they sat down round the table. They talked rather loudly in German—a language with which, of course, he was well acquainted. On account of the difficulties of hearing, and the ugly accent of some of them, he got only a rough idea of their conversation. Still, it was clear that they were Nihilists or something of the sort, discussing a plot against the Czar and the Grand Dukes, involving a good deal of assassination.

The knowledge thrilled and chilled Mr. Callan. If he were discovered, they would think he knew enough to be dangerous; and they talked of removing people as blandly as if human beings were rabbits. This thrill and chill were succeeded by a terrible sensation. He felt he was going to sneeze. Then he remembered that at dinner he had sneezed two or three times, and his dear little wife had suggested that he should take some camphor on sugar at once, and a Dover's Powder when he came home from the club. He had obeyed without belief, but willing to humour her, for he played the part of husband far better than most of those who are regarded as exemplary citizens. He pinched his nose and pressed his upper lip. The sneeze passed away unborn, but a minute or two later another was anxious to take its place. There came into his mind an anecdote, imperfectly recollected, from Motley's "Rise of the Dutch Republic," a book which he greatly admired, concerning a patriot who, unable to restrain a sneeze during a surprise night attack, got a comrade to cut his throat, so that the expedition should not be discovered by the noise of the sneeze. However, after recollecting the incident, he failed to see any useful application of it. He pinched his nose till tears started, and pressed his lip till he cut it against his teeth; but the sneeze came, and all the grander for the attempted restraint. At the same moment, life-preserver in hand, he leaped out of the cupboard, hoping to dash through. He might have succeeded if he had not tripped over something and fallen heavily.

Three men held him firmly. All eight talked rapidly; then one, whom he recognised from the clerk's description as Kislinski, spoke to him in English, with a slight foreign accent.

"You are a spy."

"I am not," he replied haughtily.

"What are you?"

"A—burglar," he answered, rather less haughtily.

There was a hideous laugh all round him.

"You hardly look like a burglar in dress-clothes like that."

"I always dress for dinner, and, besides, the police interfere less with people in dress-clothes. You will see my tools in the overcoat I wear."

He shuddered and gasped as he spoke, for the horrible thought came that the explosive might have gone off as he fell.

One of them took all the tools out of his pocket, spread them on the table, and, turning, said with a smile—

"We, too, understand something of explosives. That was for bursting open the safe?"

"Yes, yes," he answered glibly, feeling that someone understood his position—"to get at the money."

"To get at the papers that would send some of our brothers to Siberia, others to death."

There was a murmur of assent, which sounded like a subdued growl of wild beasts.

"I assure you I am only a burglar. Really, if you permit me to say so, I am quite in sympathy with your charming movement."

He rather regretted the word "charming," which seemed inappropriate.

"I shall be happy to contribute to the fund."

"He seems innocent," said one of them in German.

"Yes, yes, indeed I am," he interrupted eagerly.

Less than a second later, he wished he had been born dumb, for he meant to allege that he did not know German, and had understood nothing of their conversation.

"We are trifling," said Mr. Kislinski; "we are wasting time. Suppose he is a burglar, and merely came here to steal—I don't suppose that is the truth."

"Oh, but it is!" he interrupted, feeling that his life was at stake. "Take me outside, hand me over to the police—I have done seven years already!"

"Even if he is only a burglar," continued the banker, in a dull, hard voice, "he has heard our discussion, he understands German, he knows enough to ruin our schemes, to implicate our friends abroad."

"But I would not say a word for worlds, on my honour."

"On your honour as a burglar?"

William Callan gasped. Evidently these alien immigrants did not understand the ethics of upper class burglardom.

"I can speak and understand some German with great difficulty. It is hard to hear through that cupboard. Put one of your men in there, and try."

"He knows enough," said a black-bearded man, with a thick, coarse voice and curious accent. "He knows enough, from what has been said, to destroy the use of our excellent Kislinski in our combination. Let us put it to the vote in the usual way."

"Tie him down to the seat by the table!"

One of them produced some fine cord from his pocket, and tied him up by a number of beautiful complicated knots that would have delighted the heart of a fisherman.

The banker opened the safe. Mr. Callan heard the noise of the keys, but could not turn his head to gratify a futile curiosity and see what was inside. A minute later he closed it, and the unhappy burglar saw that he held a ballot-box in his hands. The eight men sat down at the table.

"It is the usual way," said Mr. Kislinski. "A black ball counts for death, a white sets him free. The majority will settle it. In case of equality he escapes. We must be merciful."

One of the men chuckled, and William studied his ugly face, with the faint hope of taking vengeance some day.

"There seems no need for further discussion," continued Mr. Kislinski; "we can vote at once."

The men behaved with an indifference that rendered their prisoner terrified and indignant, and he even ventured to speak.

"You treat the matter as casually as if voting at a club election!"

Nobody answered him. Mr. Kislinski took the box, shook it out on the table. Seven black balls rolled from it!

"You see the result," said the banker, and Callan uttered a shout "Help! Police!" that made the room ring.

Almost simultaneously a heavy hand struck him so violently in the mouth as nearly to stun him, by hitting his head against the chair, and before he really knew what was happening, he was gagged as well as bound. They discussed the method of execution calmly, one suggesting the knife, another strangulation, a third drowning; and each proposal was criticised upon the ground that it would leave a body and suggest foul play. At last the man who had spoken of his knowledge of explosives intervened.

"It is quite simple," he said. "He says he is a burglar. Let him die like a burglar—a clumsy burglar. We will blow him up with his own explosive. I can arrange it easily. People will think that, when arranging to blow up the safe, he had an accident. Such things happen."

"That will be quite comic—to blow him up with his own stuff!" said the ugly man, with a grim laugh.

"Hush!" replied the banker. "Let us respect his feelings."

"I am sorry—we are all sorry—indeed, grieved," he continued, "not, indeed, if you are a spy, for death would be insufficient punishment; but if you are only what you say, it is most regrettable. We are, however, dealing with vast matters, we are waging war on very unequal terms, and the life of a human being, or many human beings, cannot be taken into account. It is terrible that this should be the case. We, who are not naturally cruel, deeply deplore it, but we have no choice. You must suffer for the good of the many. You will be a martyr—an unfortunate, obscure martyr—in the great cause of humanity."

There were many things that Callan would have liked to say in answer to this, but he was gagged effectually, and the eloquence of his eyes served no purpose.

Whilst the banker was speaking, the explosive expert arranged the apparatus on the table. He carefully took away a considerable quantity of the mixture, which he seemed to recognise, though Callan thought himself one of the few people acquainted with it.

"Will that be sufficient?" asked Mr. Kislinski.

"Oh, yes," replied the man. "The principal force is lateral, and this preparation spends its energy terrifically in a small area. He'll be blown to bits and the table will be wrecked, but the ceiling and the wall will stand, and the safe won't be hurt."

"What about time?" asked the banker. The man cut off a bit of fuse, lighted it, looked at his watch, and then blew it out.

"There's enough for ten minutes. We can all get away by then, and you can return afterwards. Are you ready?"

The men gathered up their hats and coats, and marched out of the room. The last but one was the banker, who took the ballot-box and balls and locked them up in the safe.

"I am deeply, deeply grieved," he said, and disappeared.

The explosive expert struck a match, lighted the fuse, and went out, turning down

the electric light. A second or two afterwards he came back, turned on the switch again. "It would have looked queer if the switch hadn't been on," he remarked.

William found himself alone. Ere going, the men had tied the chair to the table—a hollow-backed chair made in Austria—so that his face was away from the explosive, and he could not even see the fuse. In front of him was a clock pointing to ten minutes before twelve. He listened intently to the sound made by the men until it died away. The big hand of the clock showed the passage of two minutes or more ere his mind was in full working. Death! No hope! Death though innocent! Such a death that he would never be identified, and the dear little woman at home would wait and wonder and wait. And there was hardly any money left in the house, and nothing to show her how to get more, since she knew nothing of the office where he kept his papers and the cheque-book by means of which he drew on an account in a name she had never heard of. Why had he not asked the banker, who seemed a kindly man, to communicate with her and tell her how to act? All this rushed through his mind in less than half another of his minutes. He began to rage and writhe as far as he could, and pull and struggle, and bite at the gag like an angry horse at a bit. Suddenly the idea came—the fuse might go out! A keen spasm of hope was followed by the thought that his fuses never went out; he made them himself, and was proud of them.

He listened breathless. No, he could hear nothing to show whether the fuse was burning—why should he?—but his nose told him it was alight. He struggled again, and champed and bit, until something, to his surprise, gave way. The gag was loose; he spat it out and shouted "Police!" Did he shout? The noise sounded like a mere whisper; his swollen tongue seemed useless, his dry mouth ineffectual. Time after time he tried to shout. He cursed the police—the silly, blundering, stupid force at which he had mocked so often.

Five minutes to twelve! He bit his lips fiercely, hoping to make them bleed, so that the blood might lubricate his mouth, and he would be able to shout better. What was the use of shouting down in a dingy basement? Yet he made noises—prayers, curses, screams, yells; he strained at his bonds till they cut into him; he kept his eyes from the clock till curiosity overpowered him, Three minutes to the hour! As he looked. something seemed to give way in his brain. His last conscious thought ere he fainted was of the poor little woman at home.

A few minutes later Mr. William Callan opened his eyes. Water was trickling from his brow, someone was bathing his head. He looked up. Was it an angel or a policeman? It was a policeman. He made a tentative effort to move. He was free! He got up unsteadily, and then fell on the neck of the constable, sobbing.

"That's all very well," said his rescuer, "but this here's a rum start."

"How did you get in?" he asked in a whisper.

"I saw a man coming out mysterious from the back way, so, as he ran into the arms of another constable, I came in to see what was up, and got down here and found that fuse burning, so I knocked it out. Just in time, I fancy."

William looked at it. Another minute, and he would have been in fragments.

"Now," said the constable, "you can come along with me."

"Where to?"

"As if you didn't know! I expect you have been there before; I know your class. But remember—anything you say will be took down and used against you."

William Callan went along with him.

When he appeared before the "beak" next morning, the first person he saw in court was Mr. Kislinski, talking to a popular police-court solicitor, who a moment later, to the surprise of the prisoner, announced that he was appearing on his behalf. Mr. Callan held his tongue. He was puzzled as to the exact position, but felt that silence could not be injurious, whilst a repudiation of this unsolicited adviser might do harm. He was remanded after formal evidence had been given.

During the afternoon two people interviewed him. The first was his wife. When charged at the police-station, he had given his address and the name under which he lived, almost thoughtless of the consequence. The result was a sleepless night, during which he kept thinking of the shock to his wife when she heard he was a burglar, and wondering how she would behave. She behaved superbly. Let a veil be drawn tenderly over the interview, which began by her throwing herself into his arms, sobbing and declaring that she loved him, although he was a burglar, and would never abandon him.

The police-court solicitor was the other party to the second interview; he had come

upon the instructions of Mr. Kislinski. What passed between the two men may be stated in a few words. Mr. Callan saw at once that he would gain nothing by telling the truth about the banker, since it is as irregular to try to "burgle" a Nihilist as a banker, and Mr. Kislinski offered help in exchange for silence. It was important for Mr. Callan that this should seem to be his first enterprise as a burglar, and that nothing should be discovered about his former conviction, which had happened before certain unpleasant modern methods of identification came into fashion, wherefore all that he needed was a new identity and life history of a respectable character. The banker provided him with both, and also with a sham identity and life history of the man who had been caught by the police on the fearful night, and rescued, for he had been sent abroad immediately afterwards on an important political mission.

As a result of his bargain with the banker, Mr. Callan, on the second occasion when he had the pleasure of seeing the magistrate, told him a beautiful story of a blameless life, of sudden losses and poverty, of temptation by a wicked German, who wished to take advantage of his knowledge about explosives—gained quite honourably as a mining engineer—of his repentance when alone with his accomplice, of his refusal to go on with the burglary or to permit his companion to do so, of a fierce quarrel, a treacherous blow on the head, and then unconsciousness until he found himself tied hand and foot, watching in agony the fateful fuse burning towards the explosive.



"Time after time he tried to shout."

The magistrate listened patiently, said that the case was unusual, committed the prisoner for trial, and advised him to help the police to catch his accomplice. The prisoner did everything in his power—which was nothing—to comply with this good advice, but, of course, the police failed to get hold of the missing man. Mr. Callan's trial was a very sensational affair, and the illustrated papers revelled in it. The police were cynical enough to fancy that his tale was not entirely true; but the jury believed it,

and so did the kindly old gentleman who tried the case, and almost wept when an eminent "silk" eloquently described the awful sufferings of the repentant man as he lay watching the fuse burn away. The dear little woman looked very charming and pathetic in a beautiful but melancholy gown, in the choice of which she was aided by the tactful advice of the popular police-court solicitor. As a result, the prisoner got a merely nominal sentence.

It is pleasant to be able to add that Mr. Callan has retired from business. His savings were substantial, his dear little wife was firm, and he felt that his nerves had been badly shaken and could not be trusted. Perhaps he is not what really good people call "a reformed character," but he lives a simple, crimeless life of the greatest respectability, and satisfies his cravings for excitement by motoring. Lately he has talked about taking up aviation, but probably the dear little woman will clip his wings.

THE STARLINGS.

THE starlings they have come to town,
With polka dots on their robes of brown;
They sit a crowd on the old plane tree,
And sing this quaint old melody:
Creak, creak, pipe, pipe, squeak, squeak, sweet!
They come with winter snow and sleet—
Creak, creak, pipe, pipe, squeak, squeak, sweet!

Oh, starling, starling, tell me true
Of pleasant lands that have sheltered you
Of running brook and woodland tree!
This is the tale he told to me:
Creak, creak, pipe, pipe, squeak, squeak, sweet!
Above the hum of busy street—
Creak, creak, pipe, pipe, squeak, squeak, sweet!

The starlings all will fly away,
With ice and snow on a sunshine day.
Starling, starling, do not go!
I miss your pretty singing so:
Chirp, chirp, cheep, cheep, tweet, tweet, sweet!
'Tis but the sparrows in the street—
Chirp, chirp, cheep, cheep, tweet, tweet, sweet!

In summer, in a woodland glade,
When I shall walk all unafraid,
Lured by the blossom and the bee,
I'll hear this quaint old melody:
Creak, creak, pipe, pipe, squeak, squeak, sweet!
And echo call from her retreat—
Creak, creak, pipe, pipe, squeak, squeak, sweet!

The starlings they have come from town,
With polka dots on their robes of brown.
Oh, starling, starling, tell me true,
Of city far, now what think you?
Creak, creak, pipe, pipe, squeak, squeak, sweet!
This fine tale he did repeat—
Creak, creak, pipe, pipe, squeak, squeak, sweet!

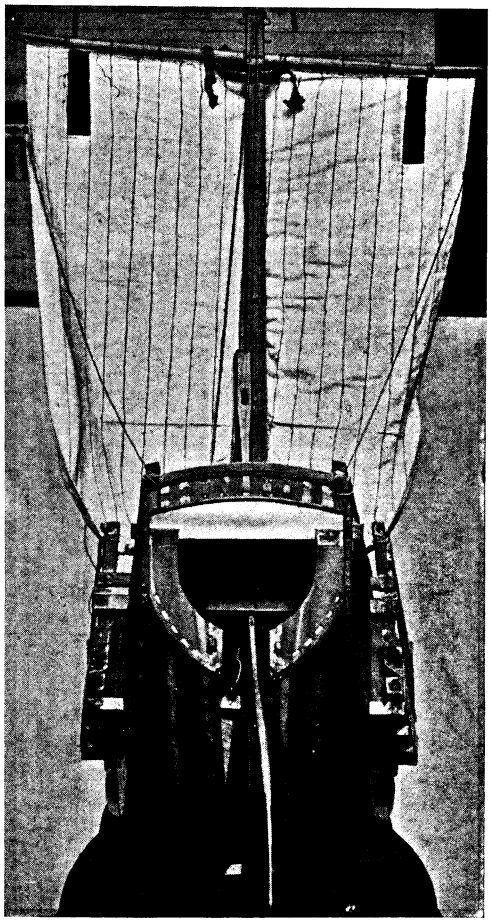
DORA SIGERSON SHORTER.

SOME CURIOSITIES OF BOAT-BUILDING

BY J. G. CRAUFURD.

Photographs by Clarke & Hyde.

THE progress of modern civilisation has been so rapid that even the fact of its being remarkable is often forgotten. Inventions are accepted as a matter of course. The Englishman of to-day sees the aeroplane flying over his head with as little astonishment as he saw the appearance of the bicycle or motor-car; he receives news by telegram, and is little concerned whether it has been communicated with or without wires; and when he ventures on the sea, he demands such comforts and luxuries that he looks upon even the boats of yesterday as intolerable anachronisms. The best antidote to this attitude is a study of the past days, when communication of any kind was slow and difficult, and sea journeys were so dangerous that crossing the Atlantic was left to buccaneers and refugees. A complete history of even such a branch of development as shipbuilding would swell into volumes, but there remain incidents which illustrate in briefer space the difficulties surmounted, the resource of the inventor, and the methods by which success has ultimately been achieved.



MODEL OF OLD TYPE OF JAPANESE VESSEL.

Built in accordance with a Government regulation that ordered all such craft to be left open at the stern, so that they might be prevented from undertaking long voyages. They would, of course, be swamped in rough weather.

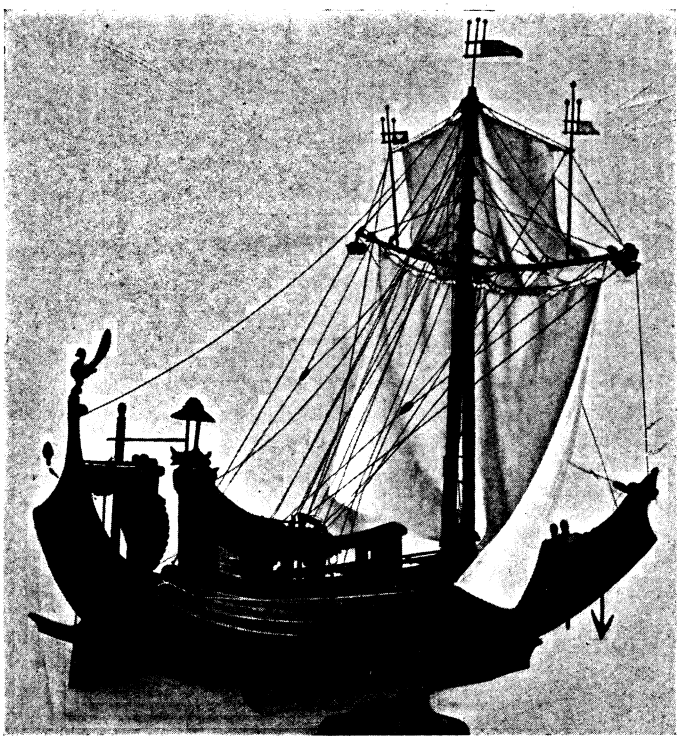
The East and the West are strangely unlike. Much as is talked of forbidden cities and hostility to foreigners, it is not generally understood that, till the middle of last century, in Japan, for example, progress not only did not exist, but its appearance was even rigorously suppressed. For centuries the Government tried to isolate the people and prevent their contact with foreigners of any kind. Only native vessels were allowed in their ports, and even after shipwreck a return home was not encouraged.

To counteract the natural instinct of an island race for travel a junk of special design was invented. No departure from the authorised pattern was allowed even in internal accommodation. Its most remarkable feature was its stern. Except some slight protection for the cargo, it was left entirely open to the waves, with the express object of increasing the dangers of a voyage. As not even a Columbus would venture far under such conditions, the Japanese were forced to confine themselves to their own coasts, off which rough weather was unlikely or could be easily avoided.

Eastern ingenuity is often diverted into curious directions. The Burmese use a junk on the Irawady so rigged and with sails so secured that it can run only before the wind. It is particularly adapted to local conditions. As roads were, till comparatively recent times,

unknown in Burma, river navigation was of particular importance as a means of communication. Usually there is considerable difficulty in ascending a river. This is not so on the Irawady, for the winds blow almost constantly dead against the current. Sails are required only to take vessels upstream with a following wind. Descending the river, they are unnecessary; the steersman has entire control, sitting on his elaborately carved seat in the very highest part of the stern.

Some native vessels with no such limited possibilities have actually foreshadowed modern European experiments. Double boats were found in several parts of the world before they were considered seriously in England. Chinese fishermen secure two canoes together, and capture their fish by letting down white painted boards into the water on each side, and thus attracting them into their boat without having to take the trouble of fishing. In Fiji waters a larger type of double vessel is a usual and most successful means of progression. Here two hulls are connected by a common deck, which generally bears a small deck-house and a sail.



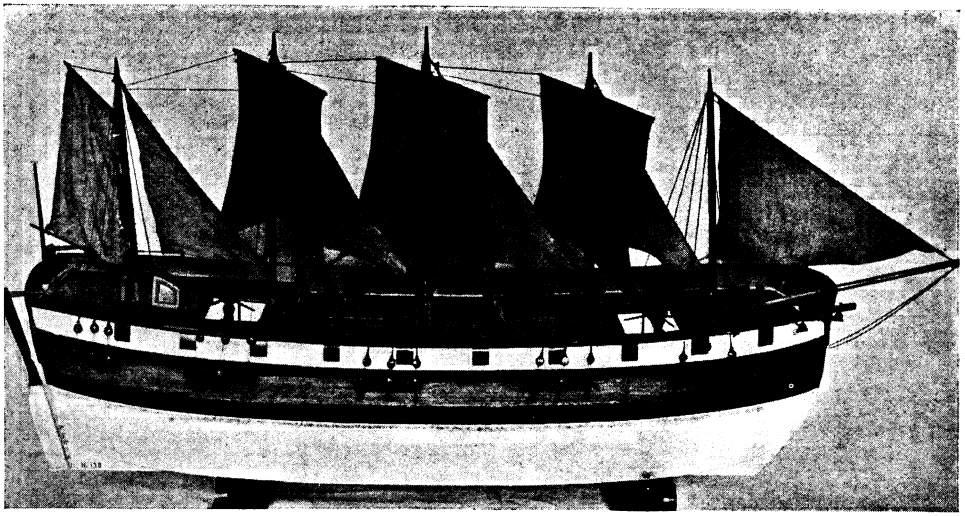
MODEL OF A BURMESE BOAT BUILT TO SAIL ONLY BEFORE THE WIND.

The yards being fixed, it is sailed upstream by the "trade winds," and drifts back with current again. Used only for river transport.

The idea was introduced into Great Britain by a certain Patrick Millar, of Dalwinston—a friend of the poet Burns—who combined invention with banking in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Economic development was making it necessary to free ships from sole reliance on the winds—not to supersede sails, but to provide some way of advancing in case of calm. Experiments were being conducted with paddle-wheels, but it was difficult to determine in what position they should be placed. Some had put a wheel at the stern, others placed one on each side. Millar introduced the double boat, and placed them between the hulls. So far did his enthusiasm carry him that he even built a triple boat.

The boat here illustrated has five paddle-wheels in this position. They could be worked only by hand-power, and it took thirty men at five capstans on deck to reach a speed of four and a half knots an hour. When sailing was possible, the paddles could all be drawn up out of the water through holes in the deck. Both hulls had separate rudders, which were, however, connected with a single tiller. She seems to have been quite seaworthy. After her trials were completed, she succeeded in crossing the North Sea, and was presented to the King of Sweden. It is encouraging to learn that Millar eventually called in the aid of steam, so that he was able to reach the speed of five knots an hour without muscular aid.

The same type of boat again appeared during experiments with screw propellers. The *Sarah of Lewis*, launched in 1823, had a hand-driven screw amidships between the two hulls. She was not a success, for, when launched on the Sussex Ouse, she was found far too slow. After this the British double boat disappeared.



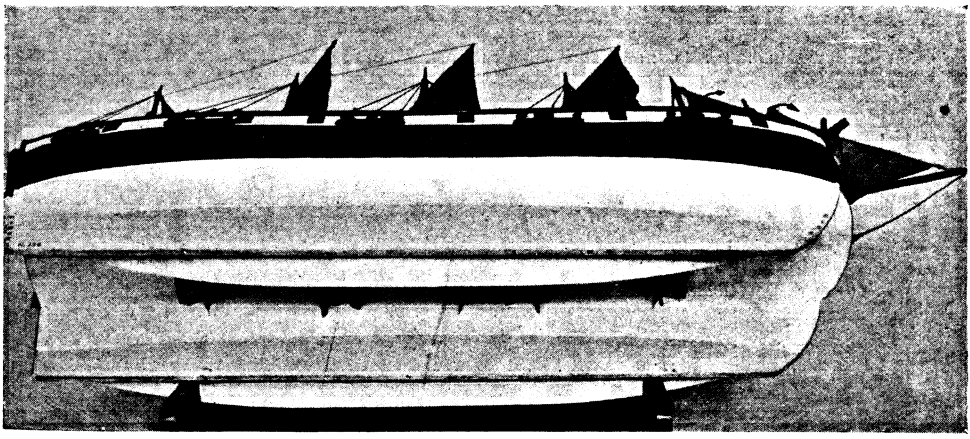
MODEL OF A DOUBLE-HULLED AUXILIARY PADDLE-STEAMER.

The vessel was constructed in such a way that its paddles were driven by means of capstans turned by hand. A speed of four and a half knots an hour could be obtained.

Till steam had finally established its superiority over sailing, it was always thought necessary to remove the screw or paddle from the water when it was not in use. The *Novelty*, which was built in 1839, though in many ways she marked an epoch, still had this device. She was the first screw cargo steamer, for, unlike her predecessor, the *Archimedes*, she served more than experimental purposes. She actually travelled from Liverpool to Constantinople with a cargo of 420 tons, and met with no mishap. Among other innovations she carried an iron mast, which, economically, she also used as a funnel.

Her importance lay in her screw. The previous history of screws is curious. A resemblance to a cork-screw justified the name of screw till, during the experiments made by Sir Francis Smith, the wooden one attached to his launch broke in half. He was much surprised to find that an increase of speed was the result of his mischance. However, he determined to take advantage of the accident, patented the remaining part as a new design, and thus became the father of the modern propeller.

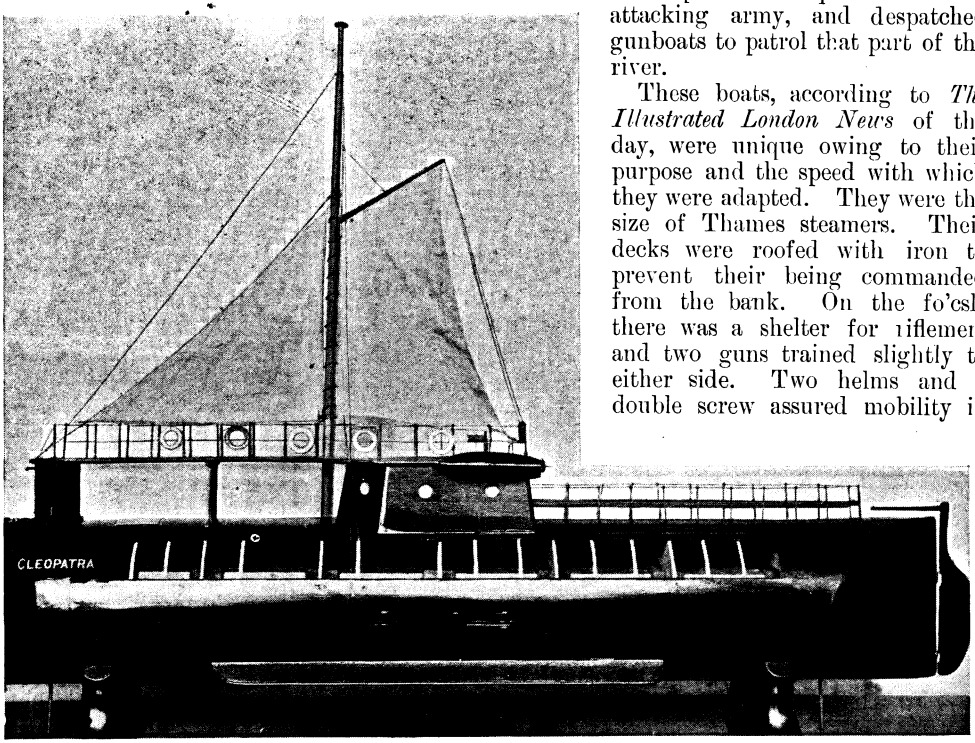
The *City of Ragusa*, as described in *The Illustrated London News* of 1870,



MODEL OF A DOUBLE-HULLED AUXILIARY PADDLE-STEAMER.

Another view of the same boat.

was the last and perhaps the most remarkable example of a ship with a removable propeller—remarkable rather for the display of courage or rashness which she occasioned than as an example of shipbuilding. She was a boat of one and three-quarter tons burden, twenty feet long, with a maximum breadth of six feet. She had originally been the ship's boat of a vessel which foundered in the Irish Channel, and fourteen of the crew had been saved in her.



MODEL OF THE VESSEL BUILT ROUND CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE, IN ORDER TO BRING IT TO THIS COUNTRY.

It was proposed to attempt a journey in her across the Atlantic.

For this purpose she was rigged as a yawl, and fitted with a propeller which could be worked either by hand or by a windmill, the most unusual feature in her appearance. The previous careers of her owners suggested hardy spirits. One, Captain Buckly, an Irishman, had fought in the Papal Army, and been taken prisoner before becoming a sailor; the other, Pietro da Costa, an Austrian captain, had previously lost his ship, wife, and children in a wreck on the Goodwin Sands.

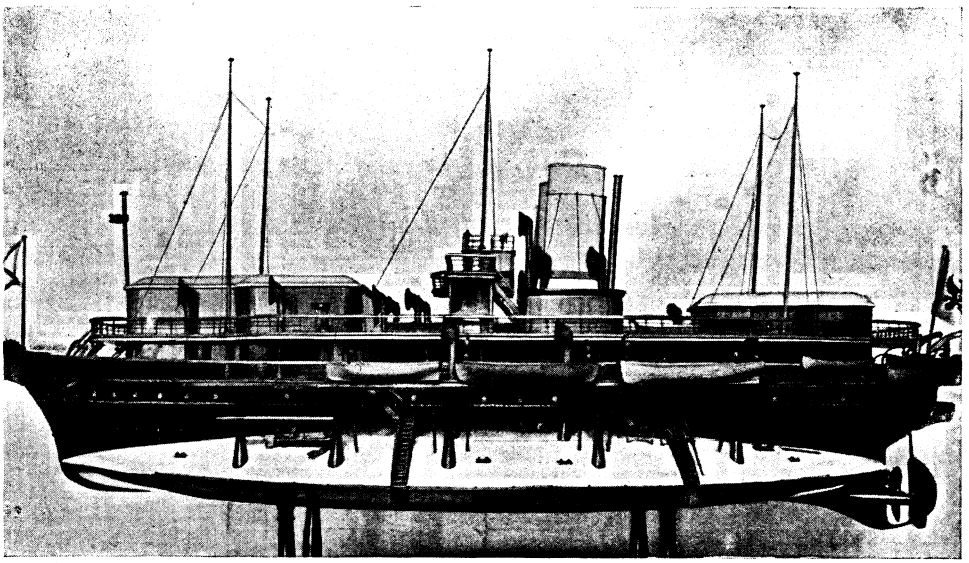
Changes in shipbuilding have been far more closely connected with improvements in propulsion than with changes in shapes. Experiments in shape, except where they have been attempted for some particular occasion, have generally met with little success.

The siege of Paris, in 1870, was such an occasion. At the time of the German advance, when it was found that the north-western defences of the city were likely to be a source of weakness, the authorities took advantage of two reaches of the Seine which would protect this quarter from an attacking army, and despatched gunboats to patrol that part of the river.

These boats, according to *The Illustrated London News* of the day, were unique owing to their purpose and the speed with which they were adapted. They were the size of Thames steamers. Their decks were roofed with iron to prevent their being commanded from the bank. On the fo'csle there was a shelter for riflemen, and two guns trained slightly to either side. Two helms and a double screw assured mobility in the face of the enemy. A small fleet of these impromptu ironclads was prepared to help in keeping off the victorious enemy.

The boat which carried Cleopatra's Needle to London from Alexandria was naturally of a singular shape. It was, in fact, worthy of its burden. After an existence of some three thousand years at Heliopolis and Alexandria, the obelisk was presented to the British Government early in the nineteenth century by the Khedive of Egypt. Not till 1877, however, was any attempt made to convey it to England, when, as the Government had refused to bear the expense, the burden was taken up by Sir Erasmus Wilson.

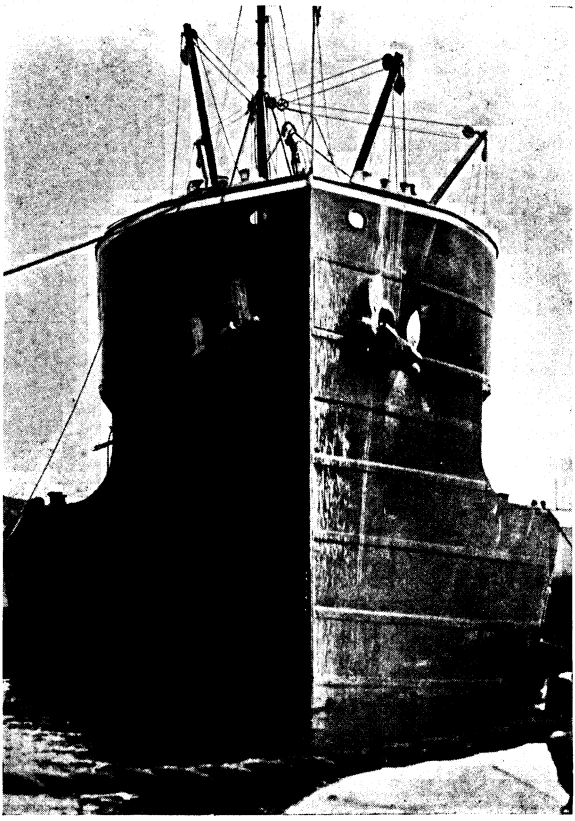
The "Needle" was encased and sealed in



MODEL OF THE "LIVADIA," BUILT AT GLASGOW IN 1880.

an iron cylinder as it lay in the sand, and then rolled down into a dock, where a deck-house, mast, and rudder were added. In this state it was towed towards England. The strange ship encountered such rough weather in the Bay of Biscay —where six men perished in a bold attempt to succour her crew —that she was forced to seek refuge in Ferrol harbour. From here, after considerable delay, she was able to proceed on her journey to England.

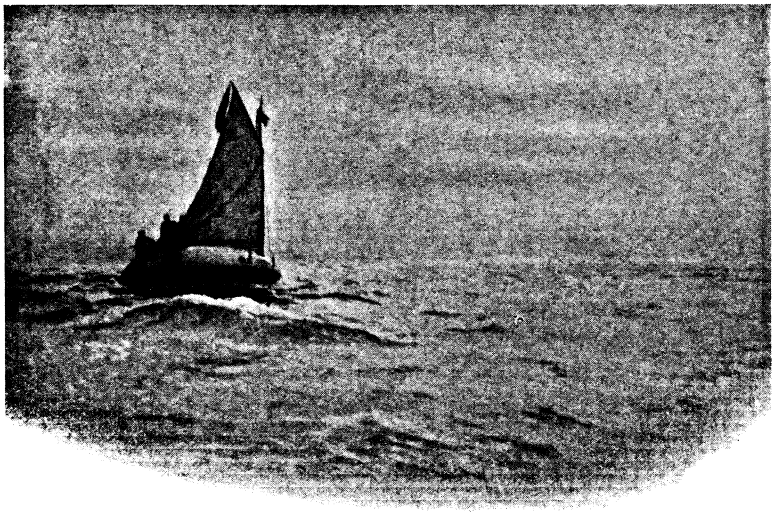
In 1880 an interesting attempt to revolutionise yacht building wasmade. Messrs. John Elder & Co.



THE TURRET SHIP.

These vessels combine great structural strength with better hold-storage and decreased tonnage dues.

were commissioned by the Russian Admiralty to build a yacht of a design modified from that of a circular floating battery which they had recently invented. The *Livadia*, as she was named, had a flat bottom and a hull most correctly described as turbot-shaped. She had a superstructure which, in spite of extreme breadth, was of a less unusual appearance. Her dimensions show her peculiarities. Her length was 235 feet, her breadth 152 feet (she carried three funnels abreast); her depth from the deck was 36·6 feet, and her draught only 6·6 feet.



AT SEA IN A GALE ON THE "URAED," A LIFEBOAT INVENTED BY A NORWEGIAN, CAPTAIN BRUDE.

This is egg-shaped, with sail and rudder so fixed as to be workable from the interior, and it is claimed to be absolutely safe and unsinkable in the very roughest weather.

The most successful experiment in shape has been the turret ship—perhaps, since it has no connection with warships, more correctly called a turret-decked ship. It is built solely for cargo. The model of the inventors, Messrs. Doxford & Co., has been regularly adopted by the Clan Line of steamships, and has proved most satisfactory.

As is shown in the illustration, a little way above the water-line it suddenly narrows, the upper portion consisting of a deck—the turret deck, in fact—of considerably less width. This device improves the storage capacity, and, by getting rid of unnecessary weight, considerably decreases the tonnage and therefore tonnage dues. The shape gives great steadiness, and as the waves must break first against the hull, the turret deck is dry even in the roughest weather. Structural strength is, in fact, combined with economy and efficiency.

A curious experiment has been made in recent years by a Captain Brude, of Norway. He has invented a lifeboat of new design, built in the shape of an egg. The *Uraed*, as she is called, can ride even the worst of storms, for she is decked right over as a protection from the waves. It is claimed that she can even be thrown ashore on a rocky coast without danger to the occupants—a quality which would make her invaluable.

Captain Brude himself sailed in her, as a test, from Norway to Newfoundland during the season of autumn gales. His journey was completely successful, and he may be seen in the illustration safe in the harbour of St. John's. The journey created much interest at Lloyd's, which he visited with his model on returning to England.

The *Uraed* belongs not so much to the past as to the inventions of the present day, on some of which the developments of the future must depend.

For example, *The Autocar* recently described a motor-car boat—the invention of a M. Ravallier—which could travel by land as well as by water.

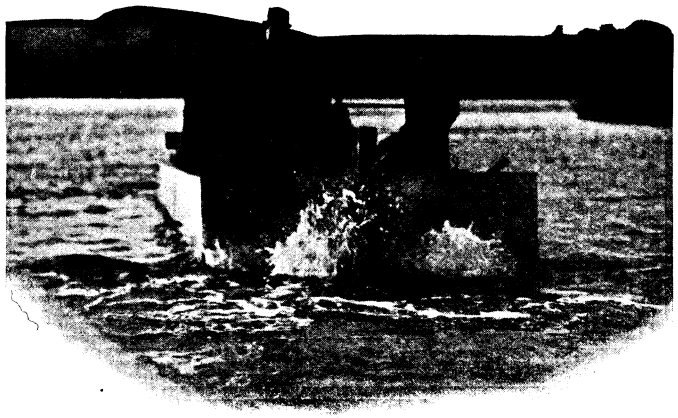
The boat is of an ordinary shape, but it



THE "URAED" AFTER THE VOYAGE: SAFE IN THE HARBOUR AT ST. JOHN'S.

has two pairs of wheels attached to axles which are encased in watertight compartments. Two separate engines are used for land and for water; with the one it can exceed 20 miles an hour, while with the other it reaches 6 miles an hour.

A great difficulty in the way of such an invention is how to enter or leave the water. Where no embankments exist, the approach to water is generally muddy or, at any rate, ill-suited to a motor-car. Its tests by the French Minister of Works were carried out satisfactorily.



TESTING THE BUBBLE PROPULSION THEORY: THE RAFT OR PUNT UNDER WAY.

It is perhaps more interesting to consider a remarkable invention of the present day which claims superiority over all other means of progression.

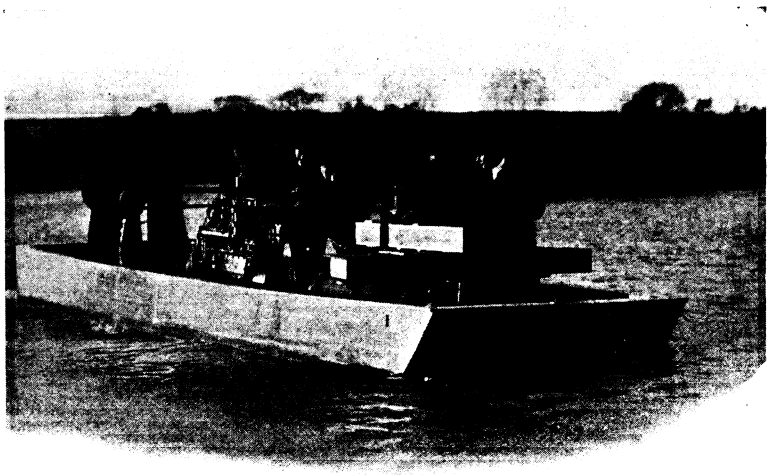


ROUGH PLAN OF THE BOTTOM OF A BUBBLE BOAT.

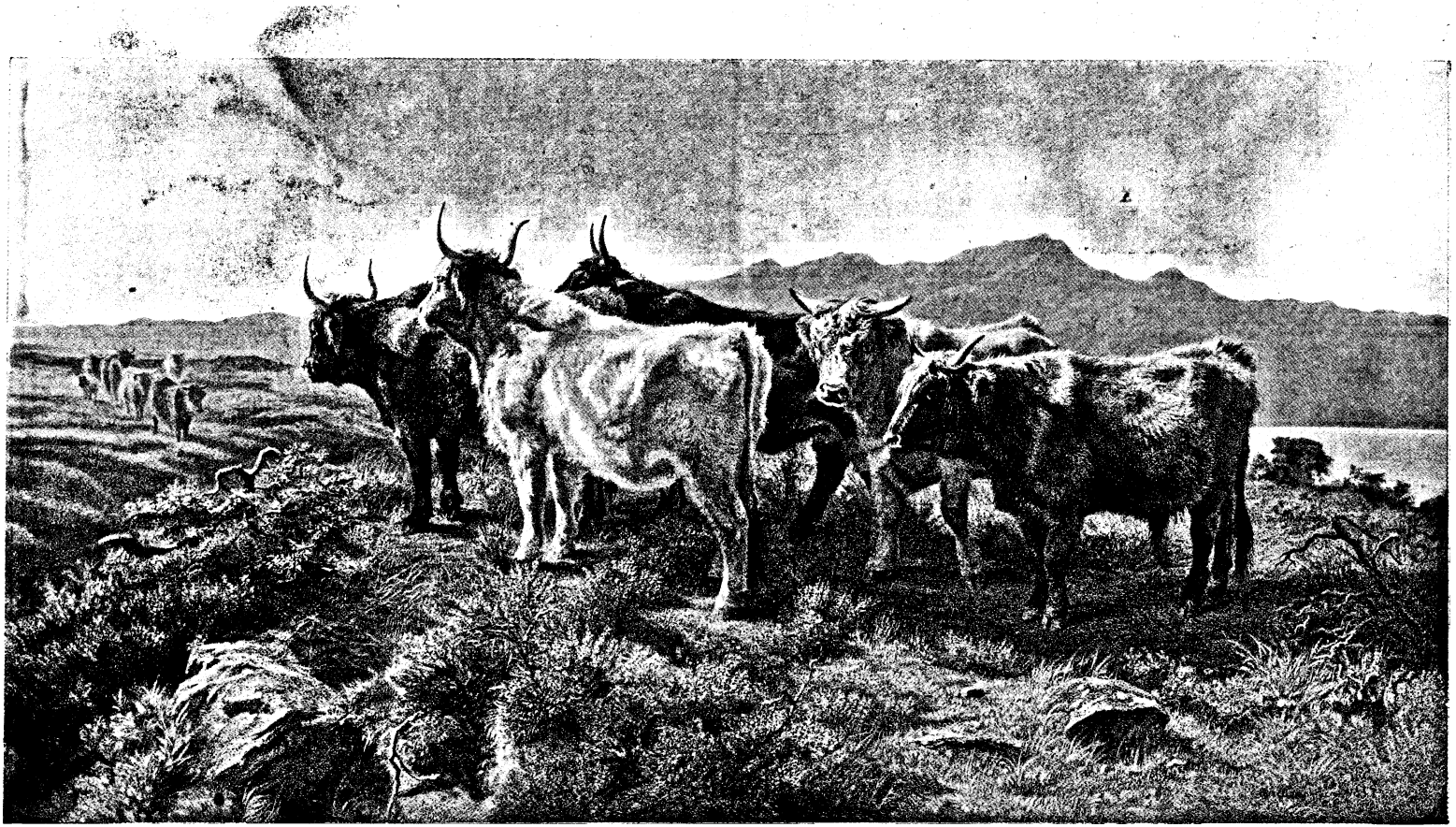
An Australian, a Mr. Schroeder, has devised a system of propelling boats by air-bubbles. His idea is to force air through a system of holes in the bottom of the vessel, which are so arranged that there is practically an air-cushion between the bottom and the water. Only small engine-power is required, as the inventor does not rely on the forcible expulsion of air for his motive power, but on the lifting power of the air-bubbles themselves. By shutting off the air from some of the holes near the stern, the bow can be made to rise so that the ship goes astern. The boats are expected to be able to travel at unheard-of speeds, and are non-capsizable.

The invention has already been tested by the Admiralty experts. Air-pumping engines were fitted to a large square punt, and under these adverse circumstances excellent results were obtained.

At the present time progress continues in every branch of shipbuilding. *Orions* succeed *Dreadnoughts*, *Olympics* succeed *Lusitanias*, but in all developments the object of curiosity is an instructive and important factor, even when it is merely the invention which has been hitherto unsuccessful or at least has failed to force itself into commercial prominence.



TESTING THE THEORY OF PROPULSION BY MEANS OF AIR-BUBBLES.



"MORNING IN THE HIGHLANDS." BY ROSA BONHEUR.

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IN THE GARDEN.

By HARRISON RHODES.

AT one side of the great Renaissance palace that crowns the hill at Caprizano there lies a little garden, built on the crumbling bastion of an earlier castle, remnant of the mediæval days when the lords of the city needed a sombre eagle's nest of armed men, not this gorgeous pleasure house where now, at almost the end of the eighteenth century, they played at being kings of their little principality, and led an idle, gossiping, gay, tinkling kind of life in that strange, calm, sunlit St. Martin's summer which, in some remote places, preceded the storm which, breaking in Paris, was soon to sweep over the whole of Europe. In those late days of the Princes of Caprizano, the little garden was much as the occasional traveller of to-day will find it. In the middle the fountain has now run dry; then a nymph poured water from a vase upon two frightened dolphins. Then, as now, pink oleanders bloomed. Then, as now, on the long hillside to the right, beyond the brown city wall, when autumn came, purple and white grapes hung in long garlands from one patient tree to another, and as the sun gradually sank towards the hills beyond the valley, snatches of the same songs that the home-going peasant still sings in this Umbrian country rose to the garden.

Here, on a September afternoon of those days, a girl came, to be alone and to think. She was Maddalena Francesca Maria delle Foscare, daughter of Sigismondo, twenty-second Prince of Caprizano, aged twenty, with chestnut hair and blue eyes such as one finds in the hills now, and a heart unhappy and tumultuous, such as one may find sometimes everywhere. She came to the terrace's edge and took one long look at the familiar green slopes where she had seen the gathering of so many vintages. She was a *principessa*, and she well knew what was due to her station, but she thought that in this garden, where the pink oleanders still displayed a few tattered flowers, she was alone. She sank on her knees, in her green brocaded gown, and put her head down upon the parapet. The young man in the corner, who, half hidden by a clump of laurel, had been dreaming over the lovely green-brown landscape, could not tell whether or not she might be crying.

"*Principessa mia!*" he called out softly, and pushed his way through the bushes towards her.

He was dark-eyed, black-haired, and he was dressed all in black. The coat was of good cloth and fashionably cut. He wore it with an air—or was it not with just a little too much of an air? He might, perhaps, have been any unimportant gentleman-in-waiting at this little court of Caprizano, had he not carried in his hand a queer plaything, carefully worked by some ingenious goldsmith and set with jewels. It was, in miniature, what in the earlier days the humpbacked court jester might have carried; but the fool's head was in gold, as was the tinkling little bell at the tip of his silver cap, and his one eye was an emerald and his other a sapphire. Wherever Francesco Barzucco went, this fantastic toy gleamed against his sober black, and made him—what he perhaps did not dislike being—the most striking figure around the great palace.

Court jesters were long since out of fashion, and Caprizano was proud to move with the fashion. Twice had Prince Sigismondo been the journey to Paris and Versailles. Twice every year there came out to him new coats, even new books, from France. Nothing so mediæval as the thing Barzucco played at being would have been tolerated. Yet he was allowed his jewelled toy, and the Prince paid for it. And as Francesco himself often asked, what was he, after all, but the jester? ("Without the hump," he would add, straightening himself and showing, not disadvantageously, his slender figure.) Had he not, to all intents and purposes, been taken in at the palace gates one evening, out of a dusty road and an unknown, perhaps dustier, past, to sing a song for his supper? And had he not now stayed on for six months to pay for more suppers and for his black clothes and his ironic jester's toy by singing

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more songs or writing them, or arranging *fêtes*, or making a thousand gay speeches and as many doubtful innuendoes, that the days of Caprizano might seem to its princeling diverting as were those at Versailles to a greater monarch? Jester he was, with a jester's liberty of action and of speech. Yet no fool in motley can ever have made the picture he did, pushing aside the laurel and the branches of tattered pink oleander blooms.

"*Principessa mia!*" he murmured again.

The girl started at his voice, and the dignity she had forgotten for a little while came back. Poor little dignity of a little princess! It came and went so often if she was not careful. Poor passionate child of two centuries, standing on the terrace of her sixteenth-century palace, vaguely feeling the nineteenth-century come with all its questions, its problems, its love of liberty—a child of the long line of the Delle Foscare, proud of the blood, proud of the isolation, yet somehow always peering with restless curiosity along the dusty white road that led down and off into the unknown world—along the road by which this odd Barzucco had come to the palace gate.

"I came to see the sunset," she said quietly, turning to him.

"Yes, *Principessa*," he answered her. "You did well. It will never be the same again."

She looked at him quickly, with her head raised a little higher.

"After to-morrow," he went on. And as if to show that he was a jester, afraid not even of princesses, with a little laugh he lightly tossed up and caught his jewelled toy. Yet he kept his eyes fixed intently, gravely on her.

"Naturally—my betrothal, the coming of my future husband." She still held her head high, but she stopped, and there was a little catch in her voice. Then in an instant she went on, with a lighter air and an odd little laugh—

"Did you not say once, Barzucco, that you had known the Duke of Brenta at Venice?"

"Yes."

"Then you can say that you wish me well?" There was a pause. Maddalena, with great apparent indifference, fingered a gold chain. The young man, lounging on the parapet—as one should not before princesses—looked at the girl with a sharp, shrewd glance as if he were choosing an answer. Then she turned to him, and his eyes fell, but they seemed to soften, too.

"Oh, *Principessa*, you know that it would be impossible for me to wish you other than well."

This was no answer; they both knew it.

There was another silence. The girl's irregular, almost thin face changed its expression rapidly as thoughts rippled over it. It was not the classic Italian beauty; there was something of the wayward, nervous loveliness of our own days and of the north in it. Suddenly she clasped her hands almost passionately together, as if to keep herself from speaking, and then she spoke.

"It is nothing, Barzucco, to be a princess."

"But——" began the young man, with a gesture of protest.

"Nothing," she went on impatiently. "It is just a cheat. They all tell me it is not so—that the world is for those born nobly. They know no better. They are all born nobly, more or less so—all but you, my poor Barzucco."

He bowed—was it ironically?—before her. But she scarcely noticed him; after all, she was a princess.

"To be born nobly is to be cheated of the world, Barzucco. It is to stand here for ever, and never go down the road there." She pointed to where, gleaming white in the dusk, it led down the hillside to Florence, Paris, London—to the world.

"They let me grow up—they have been even foolish enough to let me read some books. They allow me to become a person with a heart and an intelligence, and then—oh, then——"

"Then," said Barzucco, "they send to Venice for a husband for you whom you have never met. And to-morrow you are betrothed, and in a month or so you will be married and go away—down the road."

"To Venice—to another palace like this, to another life like this."

"Or worse," added Barzucco lightly. He laughed, but the girl at his side turned a little pale.

"What do you mean by that?" she asked almost angrily. "How dare you speak to me in such a manner?"

"I mean nothing—nothing that need matter. The Duke of Brenta and I would be"—he shrugged his shoulders—"would scarcely be friends if we should meet again. But I mean nothing, I swear, against a great and most admirable match. As to how I dare speak to your Excellency, it is true, as you can perhaps guess, *Principessa mia*, that I do not dare say half that is in my heart."

She turned towards him slowly. Still lounging on the parapet—as one should not

before princesses—he leant towards her, and his dark eyes met hers in one long look—as one's eyes should not.

When she spoke, she pointed down the hill again. In the dusk the road still gleamed white, and along it an occasional yellow light flashed out against the grey.

"Down there," she said—"down there people say what is in their hearts, do they not? You could. I could. Oh, Barzucco, it is nothing to be a princess!"

"Yet you would not come down the road."

"Sometimes," she answered slowly, "I think I would. Do you remember," she went on, hurrying a little, "three nights ago, those mountebanks at the palace gates?"

Three nights before, in the flickering light of four torches stuck into the earth, by the quavering music of a shrill violin, within a circle of eager Italian faces, two dark savage-looking children in dull brick-red fleshings, with torn, dingy, tinselled breech-clouts, had gone through an acrobatic performance, while a man, said to be the father, in dirty white clown's costume and painted face, had cracked jokes—and a whip at the children to encourage them. Then a pretty tired girl, of something like the Princess Maddalena's age,



"'Will you come down along the road with me?'"

sang. The clown's daughter she was, perhaps—perhaps—who knows? In the late afternoon they had come up the hill to Caprizano. That night they lit their torches, turned their hand-springs, made their jests, sang a few songs, gathered their miserable handful of coppers. At daybreak they would be gone. A wretched life, if you like, but on the road, with the lure always dancing ahead of you of the unexpected wonderful things that life might bring. That poor Giovannina, the tattered singer, the beggar maid, might always dream that some day a prince would be waiting for her by the wayside. But Maddalena, the poor little Maddalena, must take just a duke like any other, forced upon her by her parents before she could know the world and choose.

"That girl who sang, Barzucco—you remember her? Well, I could have changed places with her. Tell me, I can sing better than she? Could I not earn my living on the highways?"

"It is a poor living, *Eccellenza*," replied the young man cheerfully. "I should know. I was something like that when I was thirteen, except that the tights were green. A poor living—nothing to eat and many blows."

"But you liked it?"

"I liked it—yes. I ran away from a fatter kitchen, at the priest's house at Marelarona, to take the beatings and the liberty."

"And you ran away from your father to go to the priest's, didn't you?"

"I thought I wanted to learn to read and write. And soon after I was established at the priest's, my father ran away and left me. It seemed easier to him to have Father Bertelli support me. Those were pleasant days," he went on meditatively. "He taught me a little Latin and a little Greek; he thought he was going to make a real scholar of me. And he put the little morality there is in me there—not too much, fortunately. You want your wits about you to make your way—down there."

"But you can make your way—that's the point."

Barzucco gave a glance of satisfaction at his rich black suit and his jewelled jester's toy—perhaps at the girl by his side, too.

"*Ecco mi qua.* Here I am!" he exclaimed triumphantly.

"Yes, you can make your way," the girl murmured half to herself. Then suddenly to her companion: "I could make my way, couldn't I, Barzucco?"

He gave her an instant's glance of appraisal.

"Yes, you'd make your way," he answered with an odd laugh.

"What else did you do? You've told me some of it before, but I like to hear again. *Santa Maria*, it's all I hear of the world down there!"

"Well, after the green tights, what is the first that is worth talking about? I had a table in a little *campo* at Venice once, and two chairs, and I wrote letters for a moderate price. Yes, and poetry, too—some of the best I ever did—when there was a youth in the quarter hard enough hit in love to want to spend his money for a song to sing to her on the lagoon at night." He paused and hummed a snatch of one of his Venetian *canzonette*. Years after, in Rome, he collected and rewrote them before printing.

"And never a song for yourself—without payment, Barzucco?"

"*Cosa vuole?* What will you? Occasionally a song for myself, *Principessa*. Not often," he added slowly, with a rather wry smile—"not often without payment."

"Oh, of course, payment one must have to live," she commented lightly. "I could write letters—I could even write poetry for the quarter, I think. I could make my way. What else? What else was there? What is the most amusing thing to do down there?"

"The most amusing thing in life is always to play the comedy—isn't it?—and, more in particular, really to act it on a stage. Oh, such stages as I've acted on—not this monstrous new comedy they begin to give now, where they put a copy of the very words you are to speak into your hands. No, the *commedia dell' arte* for me. They give you a situation, just as life does, and you improvise the words for it, just as you do in life, and make them pretty, gay, or sad, as you think best. Yes, that was the best fun, being an actor. It seems real enough sometimes. And, Heaven be blessed, you never knew far ahead just what you were to be called on to be at night. It wasn't cut and dried for you. There was the uncertainty, there was the adventure—eh, body of Bacchus, there was life!"

"Yes," exclaimed the Princess Maddalena, "that might well be happiness, to be *improvisatore* of one's life. They've put my part into my hands for me. I know already every speech there is to make, from 'Good morning, my Lord of Brenta' to 'Good-bye,

my lord!' when we both totter into one grave. It is unfair—it is intolerable! And this it is to be a Princess of Caprizano!"

Her words were hot with anger and rebellion, and they fairly cut the cool evening air.

Barzucco looked at her silently, and in his eyes one might have seen his appreciation of her youth, her fragile loveliness—pale blue and chestnut, like some spring flower of the Umbrian hills—and her brave spirit, worthy of the long race she sprang from.

"Will you come down there, *Principessa mia?* Will you come down along the road with me?"

His voice had sunk almost to a whisper. She turned and stared almost uncomprehendingly at him.

"I must say now all the things I have never dared to say."

His voice was low, but there was a tenser note in it. He leaned towards her, and his dark eyes glowed in the pink dusk.

"You know why I've stayed on here—I, the vagabond of the roads? Not for the food and the clothes and this silly toy; it was for you!"

"For me?"

"For you!" He caught her hand in his.

"Not because I'm—well, because I am the *Principessa?*"

"Because you are you, because you are lovely, because your eyes have held me here for six months like a wild thing caught in a trapper's net—because I love you!"

The words had passion in them. Once one begins, on an Italian hillside while the sun is setting, is it not always easy to make love?

"I love you!" he repeated. "Even a princess has only one life to lead. Why should she not improvise with it? Why should your life not be a poem, a thing of fantasy, a *canzonetta?* Look down there. You can still see the road; it calls to you through the night. See the lights; the world has lit them to signal to you. There is happiness there, and liberty and love. Can you come? Can you care for me?"

He felt her trembling, he saw tears in her eyes.

"What does a princess know of love, Barzucco? What right have I ever had to let my thoughts go wandering?"

He gave one quick glance round. The little garden was plunged now in the night. He caught her almost roughly in his arms and kissed her.

"I think, perhaps, I've cared from the beginning," she said a little later, half crying, though her eyes shone.

* * * * *

They were to go away at four, before the dawn. Barzucco could count on selling his jester's toy to the Florentine goldsmiths, so he said, and in Florence they could pledge, as well, Maddalena's jewels.

Till then, on that blessed dusty road of adventure and liberty, could they not sing, and write letters and poetry for the lovelorn youths of the villages through which they passed? Could they not sup off country bread and cheese, with a bunch of purple grapes and a cup of the rough new autumn's wine? Could they not, if need be, sleep under the stars?

"I shall live at last!" cried the *Principessa.*

Again Barzucco caught her in his arms and kissed her hotly.

"You shall live at last, *Principessa mia.* I can make you live. I can make you forget everything except that you are in my arms."

Then he held her from him at arm's length, like some splendid trophy that in the rude warfare of life he, soldier of fortune, had snatched from this city of Caprizano.

"I, Francesco Barzucco, son of a cobbler, poet, idler, spendthrift, vagabond of the roads, I can take you from your principality of Caprizano, from all of them who thought they honoured me by making me court jester here, from his lordship of Brenta, who knows me of old and who shall know me now again!"

For an instant the girl seemed to draw herself away from him, while a look almost of fright came into her eyes. But, like a flash, the man caught her glance—understood it.

"Why can I do this?" he asked, and his dark eyes warmed her instantly back to perfect confidence. "Because I love you. I am a magician; I wield the only power that moves the world."

From a pocket somewhere he produced a ring. It was a ring she had never seen him wear—a heavy emerald, worth some great sum, it seemed, and carved, so she found later by the light in her chamber, with a lovely figure of Cupid drawing his bow.

He put it on her finger with a caress, yet at the same time he gave a little ironic laugh.

"I got it an odd time and in an odd way," he said. "And though it is all that I have

to give you, it is of a singular appropriateness."

He laughed again, but, too, again he kissed her.

Inside the palace lights had been lit, the clatter of the evening began. It would be difficult, if not dangerous, to find explanations if the Princess Maddalena lingered longer in this dark garden. She turned to go, to say "Good-bye" before, in the grey dawn, they should meet again. And a sudden solemnity came upon her.

"Listen, Barzucco, *Francesco mio*. I go for the adventure, something as you do, because I long to be poet, *improvisatore*, wayfarer, vagabond of the roads. I go also because you are beautiful, *caro mio*. But I do not go for that alone. After all, I am very young, I am very ignorant, I am very helpless; I am taking a mad, reckless step, with no one but you to tell me that I do right. I take it, I go, I love you, because I trust you. I believe you take me along with you down there because you really think I will be happier there. I think you mean to be kind to me always, not because you've seen me here, because I've been what I've been, not even because you like blue eyes and chestnut hair, because you think me pretty, but because I'm just Maddalena, a girl who loves you and who means to make you a good wife always. I'm ready to go with you; I trust you. Will you be good to me always?"

He dropped on his knees and caught her hand. Over it he bent tenderly, solemnly. He kissed it. Did she really, as she thought, feel a tear drop on it from those black eyes of his? Certain it is that after she went away, he stayed for an instant on his knees, looking after her with a kind of frightened, rapt expression of wonder and of worship such as he might have worn before some holy image. (For he was religious in a way, this Barzucco, in spite of some of the satirical verse by which he is best known.)

Something of this mood he carried to his room, where he sat for a time, so he told someone afterwards, reading in the *Vita Huova* the story of Dante and his Beatrice. An odd choice, surely, for a passionate youth on the eve of flying across the fair land of Italy with the princess of his love.

He made the simple preparations for his journey, and then sat by the open window watching the moon's flood of silver light pour over the hill-tops into the broad valley. A pretty conceit or two came into his head about Diana, the chaste, the cold. Who knows what magic a heathen goddess may work upon a poet? Who knows what interest the divine huntress may have had in the little Maddalena Francesca Maria?

There is no external event which either accounts for or even marks the miracle that the night wrought. Perhaps one can sum it all up best by saying that Barzucco, moodily resting his chin upon his hand and watching the shimmering night, fell in love as he—so often in love—had never been before and was never again.

When the moon had set and the east was flushed, a furtive knock came at the Princess Maddalena's door, and a letter was brought to her. When the bells in the tower of Santa Maria dei Monti, the Virgin of the Hills, struck three, Barzucco had lit a candle to write it. Later, in his Roman days, could he have had it back, it is even conceivable that he might have printed it, so little sense of shame had he sometimes. Some of it he would have thought prettily turned.

"Princess mine, revered and adored," he began, "for a moment last night I thought it might be real. I forgot that we played the *commedia dell' arte*, that we were *improvisatori*, that from one faint hint you built up such a poem, such a song, such a vision of beauty, purity, and passion, as these poor eyes of mine shall never see again, such as they have never seen before. When her Grace of Brenta shall float in her gondola down the Grand Canal, the Muses will weep till the lagoon rises and threatens the very town of Venice, demanding back the one great dramatic artist this our country has produced. You, calm, serene mistress of your art, played upon me as it were on a reed pipe. I believed for an instant that it might be true—that Heaven had come down to earth, that the Princess Maddalena Francesca Maria delle Foscare could give her heart to the vagabond and ruffian that I, Barzucco, am, and with her hand trustfully in mine could go along the high-road with me. For a while, in the moonlit night, the vision lasted. Then I saw how mad a fool I had been to believe that you could stoop to such a thing as me.

"For in the night I meditated upon myself, and upon what mate I would be for your gentle loveliness. Had I not tricked you in this very matter of your projected marriage? Yes, I know the Duke of Brenta. He is young, he is gallant, he is handsome, he is, I can swear it, kind and good. He will love you, you will love him. He will, in that splendid city of the sea, show you, more than

even I could, how close-packed with beauty and joy life may be.

"I hate him, yes, because I am a weak, snarling cur sometimes, as well as at others a poet touched with the divine fire. I hate him because at Venice he forgave me injuries that I tried to do him—forgave me with a generosity that put me to shame, and was low-born. But I must humble my pride. You must see me clearly. You must hate me, if you can. You must never for one moment believe that anything last night was true.

"Listen. I have a wife and two children in a little village near Verona. Sometimes I send them a little money, but I never want them with me. They hamper me, they are below me, they are behind me in the history of my career. Do you see what I stood ready to make of you if your youth, your innocence, your perfect trust, had not protected you, as some angelic armour might, against the black thing that I was? I was ready last night to loot the palace, to carry away its greatest treasure, as once before I stole the carved emerald from the palace in Venice that will soon be yours. I give them both back now.



"A furtive knock came at the Princess Maddalena's door, and letter was brought to her."

"You must forget last night, and yet, if you can do it, I would have you remember some of it. For me there was truth shining through my lies. For I love you, though I bow my head now and mean not to raise my eyes to you. Yes, I loved you. The vision of what the world could mean with you, lover and fellow-adventurer at once, trudging the gay, dusty high-road with me, made me drunk with happiness. Some day I will make a great glad poem of it. But it could never have been. I came to love you too well to drag you down, even if you would have come. But it was only I who meant anything; I do not forget that—I must not, nor must you. You are going to be triumphant, happy, always.

"Let us forget; but if we cannot, let us remember. This is wise, just, the will of God, this which we do. But in my heart a divine wound—a wound of love—will always be, from which a perfume will ever be distilled to make life a lovelier, more poignant, better thing. Good-bye!"

the worst, the most cutting revenge he could have taken. To-day, when he comes, give him the ring I gave you last night. He will recognise it, but I think he does not as yet know that I stole it from him.

"I must give it back now as his wedding gift. Oh, do you see, *Principessa mia*, that I have to let you know what sort of thing I am? I am proud—proud just because I am

FROM "THE PLUME OF FEATHERS."

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

V. THE CORDWAINER'S DAUGHTER.



UST afore Farmer Jim Mumford was had up afore the justices and fined for assaulting the nephew of Moses Butt, there was a proper tantarra at Widecombe, and all the women got in arms about it. No doubt, if Farmer Jim had falled in among a dozen mothers some fine day, they'd have treated him like the barn-yard hens treat a hawk as be thrown to 'em bound and alive —they'd have pecked the farmer to pieces, and a good many amongst us reckoned that well he deserved it.

'Twas lively arguing, and none convinced his neighbour, because every mind was made up. Then, as often happens in such a case, there comed along a man with an open mind, and each side tried for all it was worth to convince the impartial chap.

'Twas no less a one than Johnny Rowland himself, landlord of "The Plume of Feathers," that refused to take sides in the matter, and for a bit I wondered, because every humane man was dead against Mumford; and, of course, Johnny was full to the brim with the milk of human kindness, and ever ready to stand up for the weak and hardly treated. Many an old bachelor be tender as a woman at heart, and so was he; therefore I was surprised, but not for long, because, being a man more than common clever at seeing another's purpose, and burrowing through his words to his thoughts, I soon found that Johnny was playing a game and sitting on the fence as a matter of business. While he pretended to see a bit of a case for Farmer Jim, in truth he knew there was none. But the labour of trying to convince him and all the arguments and chatter made the people as dry as if they was chucked wi' dust, and they drank their quarts while struggling to make Johnny see their point of view. Every man had a try at him—from ancient Uncle Tom Cobleigh to young Harry Hawke, old Harry Hawke's son; and Nat Bradley had his say, and Samuel Bonus, he took the same side; and so did Gregory Snow, and, of course, Moses Butt—though silent as a fish most times—found his tongue about the assault, because it was his little nephew that had been treated so bad. And I—Tom Turtle —was against Mumford most steadfast also. In fact, Peter Gurney was the only man of much consequence that took Mumford's side; and there was a very good reason for that, because he married Mumford's niece, and hoped to get the biggest slice when farmer died and was cut up.

Hammer and tongs we were at it one night, and I was axed to begin at the very beginning and tell the tale all over again—how little Arthur Butt went into Farmer Jim's great five-acre field one April day, and wandered along where the stream winds under a hazel hedge. To pick Lent rosen* the harmless little boy had gone, and though 'twas well known that Farmer Jim had gived it out he would wallop any boy, or girl either, as he catched in the place, yet how can you be hard on the memory of a child of six year old? At any rate, the lad vowed after that he didn't know he was doing wrong, and none doubted his word. He just went in where there was a lot of ewes and lambs, and he played along with the other young things, and laughed to see 'em frisk and chase round, and twinkle their tails and run about him on their shaky legs. Then off he goes by the stream and sees the daffadowndillies shining so gay, and thinks on his mother, as a proper little boy would. And then he works away so hard as he knows how for to pluck a great nosegay, and he'd just got so many as his little fat hands would hold, and was setting off, proud as possible, when up runs Farmer Jim with a stout sapling ash, and whips the poor nipper till he yowls wi' pain and cries for his father to save him. He drops his bunch o' flowers and his cap, and then, when farmer let him go, he runs shouting and

* *Lent rosen*—Daffodils.

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screaming down the village to his home and his mother. His poor little back was all in great weals, where the cowardly old hunks had flogged him, and that bad was he, wi' all his nerves shattered, that they had to fetch doctor to him ; and when he come, he was so savage as the mother's self, and that was saying a lot.

So I went over the ground, and left out nought, and explained how Arthur Butt, the child's father, at his wife's wish, was going off the same evening to get the worth of forty shillings or a month out of Farmer Jim ; and how he started with that object, and how he fell in with some person or persons unknown, as made him change his mind. And then up spoke Johnny Rowland and let the cat out of the bag, and had his laugh at us.

"'Twas I," said he, "that met Arthur Butt that evening, and 'twas I prevailed with him to stay his hand. Not for love of Farmer Jim did I do it, but because I didn't want Butt to get into trouble. There's times when you must take the law in your own hands, because the law haven't any truck with one side of human nature, and it don't deal with many things that may mean life or death to a proud man or an honourable one. The law's a mean, sneaking creation very often, and justice and equity don't always run in double harness, as we all live to find out soon or late ; but, you see, Arthur Butt be thirty-five, and Farmer Jim's seventy—not too old to have a lesson, but too old to get a flogging. I put it to Arthur and advised him to act differently. I said it would be a very good thing for the old man to be pulled up and punished for his brutal conduct, since he well deserved it ; but I advised Arthur to go to work different and give the law a chance first. And the justices may be trusted to take a proper view, I honestly believe, even though Farmer Jim have got that clever, shifty, brow-beating chap, Lawyer Baskerville, from Totnes, to stand up for him. Mark me, he won't save Farmer Jim, and the old man will be punished in his pocket and told very straight the time is past when people can behave like heathen savages."

So spoke Johnny, and since he'd silenced the argyment and spoiled all by throwing himself with us against that cantankerous neighbour, the talk fell flat and a silence came over the company. Seeing which, innkeeper, as knew that silent men soon went their way, struck into the yarn about Avisa Mumford, the cordwainer's daughter.

Of course, I'd heard it, and so had Harry Hawke and so had Bonus, for he was a sort of relative of the Mumfords, though he pretended he was not ; but Snow hadn't listened to the tale, nor yet Moses Butt, nor yet Bradley. Therefore innkeeper set sail in his usual fashion, first drinking the very good health of Moses Butt, who insisted on standing him a drink, so soon as he heard that Rowland was for little Arthur Butt and against Farmer Jim.

"'Twas a bit ago, but I'm always terrible interested in people, and they know it, and so—just out of the kindness that's packed into a corner in most of us—the folk have always told me their stories one time and another. For every man Jack and woman Jill amongst us have a tale tucked away somewhere, and, of course, a terrible lot of people take their tale with 'em to the grave. In fact, I've got a notion that the silent sort have the best stories hid, if we could only quarry 'em out. But now and again, when death's knocking, 'twill loosen the doors that we bang home on memory, and more'n once them that were pluming for flight have told me things worth knowing, and surprised my senses uncommon. So it was with Avisa Mumford.

"Never a woman knowed better'n her how to keep her mouth shut on a tricky subject, and never a woman was more reluctant to pull up the blind on her own life ; but when she was going home—a longful time ago now—I took her some port wine for friendship, and the deed so much amazed her that she opened her ancient mouth for once, and told me a tale of another drink well worth my bottle of wine.

"Daughter of Obadiah Westmacott she was, and I've heard my father tell about him. The cordwainers be a vanished race nowadays, for we all walk in ready-made boots, and have no use for any save the cobbler ; but Obadiah made boots to measure, and the blacksmith helped him. When Westmacott had done his part, to the farrier went his goods, that they might be 'tackled' and fitted with plates and shoes of iron. Avisa was the old man's daughter, and 'twas her part, year in year out, to carry the boots to the smithy. There worked Joseph Mumford, great-uncle of our Farmer Jim.

Jo was a rough customer, but a good workman. He lived hard, scorned women, and harboured one eternal grievance ; and that was against his only brother, Mark. Mark, you see, inherited the farm and land. He had the elder brother's portion, and his

father liked him best; but Joseph grumbled long and bitter about it, and never would endure it like a reasonable creature. For this reason. His brother was only ten minutes older than himself, and Jo always held that, where twins were concerned, there ought to be share and share alike. But his father wasn't of his mind, and when the lads turned eighteen, he wrote his will and apprenticed Mark to the land, and made Joseph a blacksmith. No doubt the character of the young fellows influenced their father a bit, for though as like as two peas, to the eye of the chance beholder, their natures were very different, and Mark was similar to his father—a man of peace; but Joseph was not. One of the fighting, reckless sort he was, and none ever thought that he'd knuckle under and bide a blacksmith. But he proved 'em wrong, for he took to the work, and it suited his great thews and sinews. In fact, he soon found that he was a very clever man with hot iron. 'Twas said, however, that he was only getting into trim for his hereafter, and a sharp chap once declared that the Dowl's self dwelt in the forge with Joseph Mumford. For his temper was as fiery as his business; he never could control it, and time and again he was on the edge of grave trouble. He was a bit of a bully, too—in fact, much like his great-nephy, Farmer Jim—for Nature playeth tricks of that sort, and you'll often be puzzled to know where a man came from, till you hear tell about his vanished kith and kin. Humans will break back, just like cattle, and our old, rusty farmer have more of his great-uncle Jo in him than his grandfather Mark.

"The blacksmith hated Mark most steadfast, in season and out, and though the elder twin was kind enough, and shared and shared alike when the father died, nought would pacify Joseph: the more Mark gave, the more he craved. 'Twas a share in the land that he wanted, and chance, or the devil, knowing his weakness, set a trap for him. Times were rough then, and man hadn't the security against his fellow-man that he has to-day. Little was done for the poor but make 'em work to live, and they were driven by every wind that blew, you might say. Nobody was taught or minded, and if you fell ill, or broke your leg, or got half a score o' children, or ruined yourself any other way, there wasn't none to help, and you was at the mercy of the world afore you could blow your nose. And the law was weaker than now in some ways, though stronger in others. But Joseph had a streak of the savage in him and a good pinch of the fox. So he didn't fear the law, yet was cunning enough to set about breaking it in such a way that his sin should not find him out. And life dealt thus with him and tuned him to listen to the devil's whisper.

"It began with a curious discovery that he made, and concerned a woman.

"Avisa Westmacott, according to her own tale to me, weren't much to look at in her youth, but she had a grand head of black hair and was built on a large pattern. It happened with her, however, like it does with most, and love tickled her at twenty. But the man she'd lost her heart to didn't know it: 'twas another made the discovery, and only happed on it by accident. The girl stood in the forge-mouth talking to Jo one day, while he finished tackling a pair of her father's boots for which she had come; and while he blew the bellows, he grunted about his troubles, and expected her to say how sorry she felt for him.

"'Twins be twins,' he said, 'and 'tis a scabby, shameful thing, and never grows no better, to think I was kin-diddled out of my rightful share of land and house. Everything—everything alike about us to a hair, except that I be twice the man that Mark is. The same hatchet noses, the same brown eyes, the same moustaches, the same way of showing our teeth when we'm angered, the same liking in food and drink, the same cusses, the same——'

"'Stuff!' says Avisa, interrupting him. 'If you saw your brother oftener, you'd not talk that twaddle. You'm as different as chalk from cheese in everything but your great arms and your great strength. He's easy, you're hard; he's handsome, you're ugly; his voice be gentle and kindly, you snort and snap and snarl like a savage dog.'

"You see, love has terrible searching eyes, and though them men looked like enough to all the rest of the world, they didn't to Avisa, because she cared for one, but had no use for t'other.

"'My inners! I'm hearing things!' says Jo. 'I've always been rather well satisfied to talk to you, Avisa Westmacott, because you say what you think, and ban't afeared of man or mouse—very different from most women, who weigh every word, and never tell the truth if a lie will do. So you like Mark better'n you like me?'

"'Ess fay,' she answers him, 'and who wouldn't? He's a rare, big-hearted chap, and you can see what a kindly spirit he has

in his face. He's gentle even to a naughty child. I do like him. Who wouldn't?'

"Joseph turned that over in his mind, for he was a man who knew that all knowledge may be useful. For the minute he couldn't see that the fact of Avisa caring for Mark much mattered to anybody but herself, especially as Mark was the same as his brother in the matter of females, and never thought much upon them; but he stored up the news, to chew over it later, and finished the boots and let Avisa go on her way without more talk.

"He was on to her again, though, presently, and worked pretty clever at her, and black-guarded his brother, just to hear the girl take the farmer's part. Then he changed his tone and spoke lies, to see if he could make her believe them.

"'I don't hold with marrying and giving in marriage,' he said. 'Tis a fool's game, and nine out of ten as be playing it this minute would tell you so if they dared; but sometimes the deed has to be done, and 'tis one of the troubles of owning a farm that a man generally thinks to get an heir for it. And so Mark will wed, I suppose.'

"'Not that you want him to,' she answered. 'Tis well known you've told out afore company, at "The Plume of Feathers" and "The Ring o' Bells," that you'd outlive Mark Mumford if you had to wait a hundred years to do so.'

"'Stuff and nonsense!' he answered. 'I'm past that foolishness. I'm very willing for him to marry. I dare say we'll be friends again some day. We get cooler as we get older. Perhaps the man will find a wife presently as will bring us together.'

"She was a good bit surprised to hear him say that; and she was pleased, too, for though a silly sort of woman, the maiden was just and decent-minded. But 'twas her simpleness he built on.

"'I hope such a thing will happen,' she told him, and he answered that he wouldn't say but what he hoped so, too. Then he left it and spoke no more on the subject for a good bit.

"But his hookem-snivey brains was hatching out something all the while, and there were other things that he did before he went for Avisa again. He began to tone down a bit, not all of a sudden, of course—too clever for that—but gradual and slow. He cussed his brother less often, and bore to hear his name without getting in a rage. And he was friendly to the Westmacotts likewise. He dropped in and had a dish o' tea with 'em two Sundays running, and spoke that civil that old Obadiah rubbed his eyes and said to his girl: 'Be shot if the fierce chap ban't after you, Avisa!'

"But his daughter didn't think so, and didn't want him, nohow.

"They talked together again presently, and Joseph began to wonder if he'd ever make it up with Mark, and say he was a cruel lonely man, and so on. Then he asked Avisa again what she thought of Mark, and the girl, not built to hide anything in that quarter, purred about the blacksmith's brother and said she'd never seen his like.

"'Be gormed if you don't love him!' plumps out Joseph. ''Tis useless for you to deny it to me.'

"'Ess fay!' she answers. 'I love the ground he walks on!'

"So do I,' says Joseph, with his grim laugh, 'for 'tis mine as much as his. But that's neither here nor there. You've told me your secret, like the brave creature you are, and I'll respect it—be sure of that. And, what's more, if my brother have got to be married, I'll say this: he couldn't have a woman better like to suit him than you.'

"She shook her head at that. 'Mark don't want a woman about him,' she answered—'not yet, anyway. But if ever he takes one, she'll be lucky, for a proper husband he will make.'

"Joseph agreed with her. 'I'm beginning to understand my brother better,' he declared, 'and I see two things—that he's a bit out of the common, as you say, and I ought to be proud of him, and that 'tis time he thought about marrying. I speak frankly to you, Avisa Westmacott, because we're old friends now, and you've got a terrible lot of sense; and this I will say, that if I was a marrying man, I'd offer for you myself.'

"'''Tis very kind, I'm sure,' she answered, 'but don't you do that, Mr. Mumford, because I don't want you.'

"'No doubt,' he said. 'All the same, I owe you something for opening my eyes a bit concerning Mark. I have to thank you there. You read his character very clever, and I mean to try and make up our quarrel, if I can, and be his enemy no more.'

"From that time forward Joseph appeared to change altogether, and everybody was terrible astonished to hear as he'd grown friendly with Mark. But so it was, and in secret Avisa got the credit from the blacksmith. He kept her on tenter-hooks, in a manner of speaking, and was always saying what a wife she'd make for Mark,

and always cross-questioning her as to how she was getting on with him. So she begged that he'd think no more of what she'd confessed to him.

"'Me and your brother be very good friends and no more,' she said. 'He's very kind and civil, and once he went so far as to ax me to go for a walk with him. He was careful to say he didn't mean keeping company nor nothing like that, and I said I quite understood. But I went, and he talked over all the girls in Widecombe, and axed me, in a casual sort o' way, what I thought of 'em as wives. He's wishful to marry, and he's looking round, but 'tis certain that I be the last woman in his mind. Therefore I hope you'll forget what I said. 'Twould be a dreadful thing to happen if he heard it.'

"Joseph appeared to be troubled at that.

"'Dash my wig!' he answered. 'How blind a man can be! Here's you, ready to his hand, and made for him every way—just the living woman he wants—and yet he must be looking further! Who is he after?'

"'Nobody,' she told him. 'I was quite fair and honest, and praised half a score. But he always had something against 'em. They was too tall, or too short, or too noisy, or too silly. Some laughed too much, and others too little; some worked too hard, and weren't never game for a revel; and others didn't work enough, and was sure to spend all his money. In fact, I got weary of the talk, and axed him at last what sort of a girl he did want. Then he said a simple, healthy, modest sort of a girl, who knew the worth of money and the value of peace. She had to be dark, and if she could sing a bit, so much the better. Medium height she had to be, and not the sort that run to fatness after forty—that was his own expression.'

"'Well,' cried Joseph, 'what a flitter-mouse * the man must be! He might have been describing you yourself, Avisa! 'Tis the very picture of you!'

"She laughed, and begged as he'd say no more on the subject. But the time was come to say a lot more, and chance helped Joseph in his purpose. It seemed that, for some reason he didn't explain, he was perfectly determined for Mark to take Avisa, and he told the girl presently, much to her anger, that he'd named her name to his brother. She was properly furious then, and said as she'd never speak to him no more; but he let her flare herself out, and then made it up.

"'Don't be silly!' he said. 'I ban't thinking of you, and I don't care a jot for your feelings; I'm thinking of my brother Mark, and his future. I've had the luck to hit on the one woman in the world to make him a valuable wife, and I'm going to bring it about, and do him such a turn that he'll bless me to his dying day. You love him, and you admit it, else I shouldn't be so busy, but the hardest half of the battle's won; and since he's in one of them silly states that men get into, that prevents 'em from seeing their own good, then it behoves his well-wishers to work for him; and I shouldn't be the friend to Mark that henceforth I mean to be if I didn't further this. Now, just you listen to me, Avisa Westmacott. It lies in a nutshell. Your woman's instinct tells you that you'd make a perfect wife for that man, and my male wits tell me the same. I'm no mumphead, and I know you both well by now. Then what's the problem before us? Why, to make Mark come forward, and open his eyes to the truth of his luck. Do you know Jane Brimblecombe—her that lives up to Metherill with her daft son, Kek Brimblecombe?'

"'I know about her,' said Avisa. 'She's a terrible bad old woman, and was ducked for a witch some years agone.'

"'She's not bad at all; but the folk be frightened of her, and 'tis a case of give a dog a bad name and hang him. She's wondrous clever and wondrous kind, and time and again, wi' her cautcheries, she's cured my brother's cattle and cured me. A white witch, if a witch at all. She'll always do anybody a good turn if 'tis in her power, but not for all the money in the Bank of England would she do anybody a bad turn, even if she could.'

"'What can she do, then?' asked Avisa. 'She may be clever—and that's not denied—but she can't make your brother want me if he don't.'

"'It isn't that he don't,' the man answered. He's just hovering, and all he needs is a gentle push in the right direction afore he turns elsewhere. And 'tis just that gentle push that Jane Brimblecombe knows how to give him. You mustn't think that she'd take the law into her own hands and mix a love philtre to *make* him love you, or anything like that. Of course, I wouldn't allow such a thing, and no more would you. But this she can do, and willingly she would—just for kindness to two young creatures, and

* *Flitter-mouse*—Bat.



"'I'm hearing things!'"

all free of charge. She'd give you a potion made of a herb of might what she knows about—'tis moon-wort, I believe, gathered at a certain hour and season—and mingled, no doubt, with other things, the drink would do this on Mark. 'Twould clear his eyes if they be dim, and screw up his spirit if it be weak. I beg you'll understand me exactly, Avisa, because I don't want for you to think I'm forcing Mark's hand, or turning him towards you by a witch's trick. I'd scorn to do such a wicked deed as that. No, this stuff that Jane told me about—I mentioned no names but my own, and pretended 'twas for me—does nought but clear the understanding and show a man what accident hath hid. If in sober truth you be the woman for Mark, as I think, then, after this charm, he'll know it and our object will be gained; if you ban't for him, the charm will leave him just as he is, and nought will come of it. 'Tis innocence itself.'

"Avisa thought a lot upon that. But one thing puzzled her. 'How d'you mean you pretended it was for yourself?' she asked; and he had his answer ready. 'Why, I told Jane that I was in doubt about a young woman—whether to offer for her or not.' And she said 'twas a common state, and provided for by a charm that she'd used a score of times, and never known to fail. 'I keep it by me,' she said, 'so often have I the need of it.' With that she drew off half a wine-glass of stuff—so clear as crystal—and put it in a bottle for me. 'Drink that next time you go walking with the maiden,' said Jane, 'and afore you've been with her half an hour, you'll know, as clear as clear, whether she's to be the one. It'll come in your mind like a flash of lightning. 'Tis a charm that my old father taught me, and I never charge for it till after; but when it have done its work, the grateful ones often give me five shillings for easing their minds one way or another.'

"With that, Joseph brought out his little bottle, and Avisa looked at it, terrible interested, of course.

"'You'll do what you like,' said Joseph, 'but, if you take my advice, you'll plan to get him to drink it. There's only one thing to say. None must know about it—naturally. If you're game, I'll get him to ask me and you, one Sunday evening, to the farm, and you can pour out tea for us and pop it into his cup. Then I'd make a shift to go, and leave you alone with him, while his sight was being cleared to see you as you are. I've little doubt in my own mind that it would come over him in a flash, and that he'd offer for you afore he'd let you go. And if he didn't—why, there it is, and we know once and for all that you ban't for him.'

"She thought a lot before she spoke. You must remember that these things happened a mighty long time ago, and charms and witchcraft meant a lot more then to simple folk than they do now. Besides, she was a believing soul at best. 'Twas a great temptation to Avisa, and the way that Joseph put it calmed all fear; for she argued the charm weren't a fierce and terrible drug, that would make Mark love her willy-nilly, but just a harmless thing, that would open his eyes and perhaps help him to see what a useful and likely creature she was. In fact, Joseph put the matter in that shape. 'If he likes you, we shall soon know it; if he don't—well, no harm's done,' he said.

"But she didn't decide in a minute. She was a deliberate woman, who looked all round an apple before she bit it, and she felt this business wanted a lot of looking round, and said so.

"He didn't grumble at that. 'Take your time,' he said. 'Think of it from every point of view; but don't tell nobody else—not a soul—because, if you do that, the charm be spoiled. You musn't let out a whisper, or else you might so well take a drop of water from the spring, for the stuff will fail.'

"So she went home to think; and her thinking, in my opinion, is the most interesting part of the tale There was three to consider, you see—herself, Mark, and Jo. And first she thought of Mark, and decided that she was doing him no wrong, because he was the very man to have a wife, and she was the very woman to be that wife. She knew it—felt it in her bones. She understood the man as well as she understood herself—and better; she knew, as surely as she knew Heaven saves from sin, that she could make him a very proper, patient helpmate. Then of herself she thought, and couldn't disguise from herself that she wanted the man something terrible. No false modesty had Avisa, even with others, so you'll guess that she didn't fool herself about her desires. That left Joseph, and there the trouble began. For, turn it over as she might, she couldn't for her life see why he was so terrible hungry that she should take Mark. What good came to him by that? Why, none at all. 'Twould probably mean childer for Mark, and the other man's last hope gone for ever of getting

the farm, either for himself or any offspring he might have in the time to come. 'Twas true that Joseph and Mark were good pals now, for a year had passed since Jo got friendly with Avisa, and during that time the brothers, by gradual stages, had come together again; but such friendliness that reigned betwixt 'em couldn't account in Avisa's mind for this fixed resolve of Joseph's that she must wed his brother. She turned it inside out and outside in, but could see no light. Then she thought to tell her father about it; but that she dursn't do, because any such thing would spoil the charm. She went round and round it, and hit on everything but the truth; and after that day she studied Joseph like a bird studies a doubtful caterpillar. At last, however, she decided—at any rate, for a time—that his idea was first-rate, and found herself in a mind to try it. Then she told him so, and he was terrible pleased to hear her decision.

"Then he planned the tea-party, and Avisa was to take the charm in her pocket; but when Saturday came, she didn't close her eyes for thinking of the morrow. The hour fixed was four o'clock, and Mark Mumford wondered what was up, though he felt very pleased to do his brother a service. Yet, when Avisa comed along alone at three o'clock—an hour too soon—Mark was much astonished and a bit vexed, because she arrived in the middle of his Sunday afternoon nap—a thing he didn't like being broken in upon. However, his guest soon made him very wide awake.

"He came down to her in his shirt-sleeves, yawning a bit. Then he put on his coat, as he'd left hanging over the arm-chair after dinner, and took his pipe from the mantelshelf, and axed her why she'd arrived an hour too soon.

"With that she made a clean breast of it, and Mark's pipe very soon went out, I promise you.

"'I be going to tell you the truth,' she said, 'though 'tis hard, for I'd feel cruel sorry to anger you against me, Mr. Mark; but 'tis like this, and don't you be shocked till you hear all. I love you. I'm very sorry about it, I'm sure; but there 'tis, and a thing have happened that makes me feel I've got to tell you. You needn't be scared, nor stare like that, nor think it an improper idea on my part. 'Tis quite a respectful feeling, and I ban't ashamed of it, no more than you'd be ashamed if you was to care for one of them girls you named over to me when us went walking together.'

"'I've never excited no hopes in you, Avisa, and you can't say I have,' answers Mark, on his guard.

"'You never have,' she answered. 'You've never led me to hope, and I ban't telling you this to put you in a corner. I'm telling you because I must tell you."

"'You ought to restrain your feelings,' he said. 'You've spoilt all now. Very like, in fullness of time, if I'd tried elsewhere and failed, I might have come round to you; but telling me this have set me right against you, and I'm much disappointed in you.'

"'That's all right,' she answered, 'and for that matter I'm disappointed, too—to think that you could hold me so low as to suppose I'd tell you this without a terrible big reason. But I tell you, as I say, because I must; and that's not to mean I'm busting with it, or have got to bring it out. 'Tis only to say that, loving you with all my heart, I put you afore anything—even my own secrets.'

"'If you've heard anything as I ought to know, of course 'tis your duty to tell me,' he answered; 'but be that as it will, it ban't leap year, and it can't have been proper to tell me you loved me.'

"However, she very soon did. She put it as clear as her poor command of speech could compass. She told him how his brother had found out that she loved him, and how his brother had much wished him to marry her.. 'He didn't want to take any unfair advantage—so he said; he only wanted for you to see me as I am.' "Then," said he, "Mark must be made to know you're the right one." And so he fetched a famous charm from Jane Brimblecombe, and gived it to me to give to you in your tea. If you'd drunk it, and if I'm the right woman for you, you'd very soon have found your eyes open; and if I was not the one for you, then the charm would have had no effect. That's how it stood; and if I had done what Joseph wanted me to do, I should have poured the stuff in your tea presently, unbeknownst to you; but—but—somehow—after a sleepless night, I felt cruel doubtful if 'twas a seemly thing, and I had to fight between believing him and hoping for the best, and ruining my own chances and telling you what we had meant to do. I prayed about it half the night, and at last 'twas put in me to tell you. So there it is, and here's the stuff—useless now, because I've told 'e.'

"With that she brought out the little bottle, and Mark, his eyes pretty round, took it from her, opened it, and smelt it. But

that told him nothing, and he corked it up again.

"'I hope I've done right,' she said. 'Tis rather a strange come-along-of-it for a maiden to tell a man she's fond of him; but I could not explain very well without giving you all the facts, and——'

"'Be quiet!' he answered. 'Let me think afore my brother comes. This may be all right, and just a part of the new friendship that he's got for me; but, on the other hand, it may be all wrong, and—and——'

"'Of course, if 'tis more powerful than he pretends, and might turn you to love me against your will, I wouldn't have you drink it on no account whatever,' says Avisa.

"He laughed at that, though 'twas an ugly fashion of laugh. 'You poor zany!' he answered her. 'Don't you see what—— But of course you don't. However, I do—luckily for myself. Yes, it may be more powerful than he pretends, no doubt. Heaven above! How if 'twas made of deadly nightshade or some dreadful thing like that?'

"'Heavens, Mr. Mark! You don't mean——' she gasped, and turned white, and fell a-shivering.

"'I don't mean nothing—except not to drink it,' he said. 'As for you, you've done right, and will get your reward. I think a lot of you for this. 'Tis quite within the bounds of hope that I'll offer for you afore long, for I don't know as I could do better, especially after you've showed yourself an honest creature, and not wishful to trap me into nothing against my will. But first there's my brother and this here bottle.'

"The cat walked in the room at the moment, and Mark, as wasn't much addicted to the creature, bade Avisa pour him out a dish of milk. Then he dropped in half of the clear liquid from the phial.

"'If 'tis harmless, Tom won't be none the worse,' he said.

"The cat went for his tea in good spirits, and lapped up the milk very clever. Then, just as he was washing his face, he gave one sudden screech and was gone. He dropped by the fender, struggled half a second, and was so dead as a stone; and Avisa and Mark were bending over him—pretty horrified, you may be sure—when in came Joseph, so gay as you please, all in his Sunday best and smiling like a picture.

"'Good evening, Jo!' said Mark. 'Tis a coorious thing to happen, but my cat have just gone and died. And I don't think us'll go on with the party, because I don't feel hungry nor yet thirsty this afternoon. This have took away my appetite. Tom was so well as you or me half a minute ago. Avisa, my dear, you'd do best to slip home along now, because I want to have a bit of a tell wi' my brother.'

"Calm and steady as a rock he kept, and Avisa, for the first time, saw what a strong man Mark was under his easy manner. So when she married him, six months later, it didn't come as such a big surprise to her as it might have done.

"Not till long after that great event did she hear what befell between the brothers; then Mark told her. But the result of the meeting all men had larned in a week.

"'When you'd gone,' said her husband to the cordwainer's daughter, 'I sat my brother down in a chair by the dead cat, and showed him the little bottle you'd brought. There weren't no call for many words, because he tumbled to it very quick what had happened. White as curds he went, and if I'd poured the stuff in a mug and commanded him to let it down, such was his baffled and shaking state that I believe he'd have took it without a fight. I'd made up my mind what to do, and I done it. "You've tried your wicked best to murder me, Joseph Mumford," I said, "and, but for an unexpected streak of sense in that maiden, as you didn't know was in her, you'd have succeeded. 'Tis only by God's watchful mercy that I ban't lying so dead as thickey cat this minute. And I give you one fortnight to get out of England—one fortnight only. Where you go I care not; but you shan't bide in your own land no more, unless it be behind bolts and bars. You've tried to murder your own flesh and blood—an innocent man, as never did you no wrong in his life, or thought wrong against you; and you plotted to do it by the hand of an innocent woman. The more said, the blacker it looks. But I forgive you, according to the command of my Saviour, and bid you begone. Never you speak to me no more, and never you speak to Avisa Westmacott no more. And for the rest of your life I hope you'll mourn the blackguard deed you've tried to do, and pray the forgiving Lord to pardon you. Now get up and go; and if you're at the forge or anywheres in England this day fortnight, I'll have you took up and let all be known."'

"That's the queer tale, and none heard it—no, not her own children—till Mrs. Mumford was dying. And as for Joseph, all she remembered was that he did as his brother bade him, and cleared out. But his after history wasn't known, though 'tis very like it would have been worth hearing."

ENGLAND'S STORY IN PORTRAIT AND PICTURE.

XVII. THE REIGN OF HENRY VI.

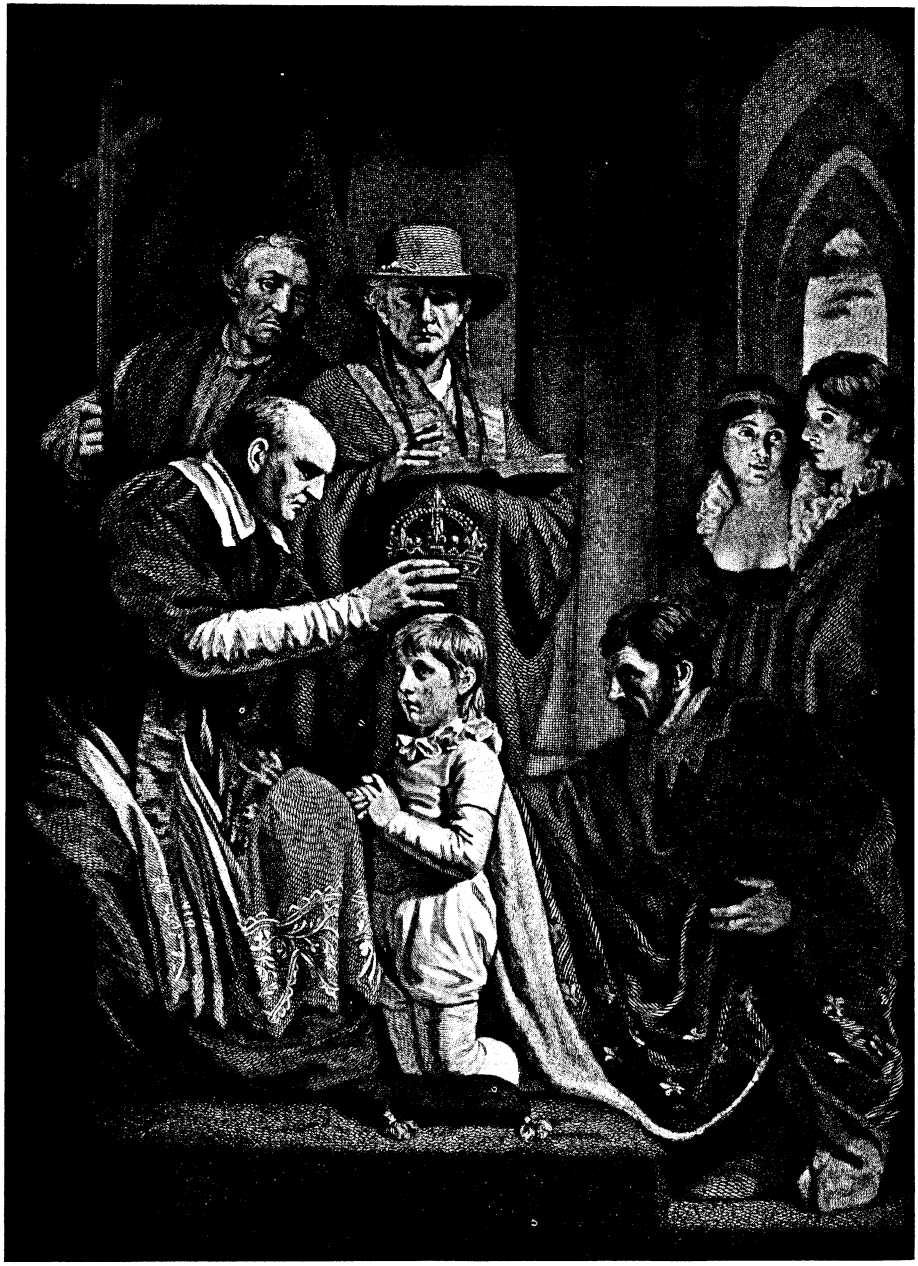
BORN at Windsor Castle in 1421, Henry VI., third monarch of the House of Lancaster, was only nine months old when, by the death of his father, Henry V., he became King of England and heir-apparent to the throne of France. His dying father, Henry V., had appointed the Duke of Bedford, already famous for his military record, to represent his interests in France, and Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, was made Protector of the Realm on his behalf in England. It was in the former country that the baby king's fortunes first began to trouble his Council, though not himself. For within two months of the death of the victorious Henry V., and the consequent accession of his infant son, the long-insane King of France, Charles VI., died also, and his son, the Dauphin, was proclaimed king by his followers, despite the conditions of the Treaty of Troyes, which settled the succession to the crown upon Henry V. and his heirs. The partisans of Charles VII., as the Dauphin was now called by them, represented about a quarter of the French nation; but north of the Loire the Treaty of Troyes was maintained, and the infant King Henry of England was unanimously recognised as rightful heir to the throne, and the authority of the Duke of Bedford, as his regent, was easily maintained, supported, as it was, by the Duke of Burgundy, the Duke of Brittany, and other powerful nobles.



HENRY VI., KING OF ENGLAND, 1422-1461.

From an engraving by G. Vertue, based upon the early oil-painting in the Royal Collection.

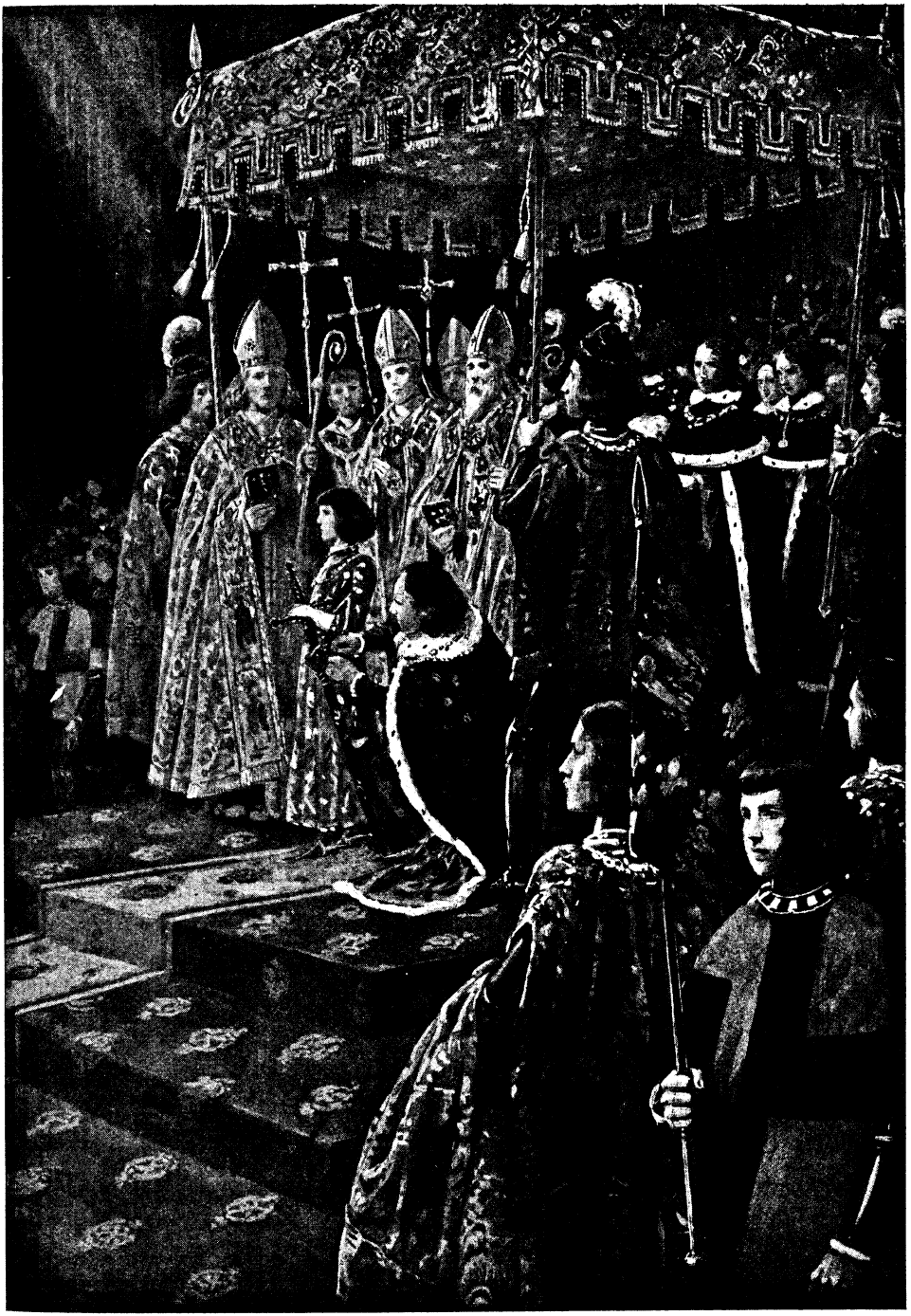
The French claimant to the throne, Charles VII., led an army against the Duke of Bedford and his Burgundian allies, but was defeated at Crevant in June 1423. The national spirit of the French was rising, however, after a long period of general depression, and with it revived their inherent hatred of England. Moreover, disaffection among the most important of the allies of the English worked favourably for the cause of the Dauphin. Unfortunately, the English regent of the youthful Henry VI., the Duke of Gloucester, at this juncture made a serious feud between himself and the powerful Duke of Burgundy. Gloucester had married Jacqueline of Holland, divorced wife of the Duke of Brabant, and now claimed her large jointure of Holland, Zealand, and Hainault. This claim was a serious encroachment upon Burgundy's kinsman, the ruling Duke of Brabant, and provoked Burgundy into severing his alliance with Bedford, with the result that both he and his ally, the Duke of Brittany, presently went over to Charles VII. Nor did all the military prestige or diplomacy of the English regent suffice to preclude other private understandings between his French supporters and their countrymen who had rallied to Charles VII. After the battle of Crevant, the English Government at home attempted to weaken his cause by detaching from it the large reinforcement he had received from Scotland, and offered release from his nineteen years' captivity in England to the Scottish King, James I., whom Henry IV. had captured and detained as hostage. His release was made conditional to the payment of forty thousand pounds and an undertaking to stop completely the assistance of



"THE CORONATION OF HENRY VI., WHEN EIGHT YEARS OLD, 1429." BY J. OPIE, R.A.

French troops against English by his subjects, either in France or in any other country. Before returning to his own country, the young king was further united to his long-time English hosts by marriage with the Lady Jane Beaufort, daughter of the Earl of Somerset and cousin of Henry VI.

But the loss of their Scottish troops did not deter the partisans of Charles VII. from their plan of campaign, and in 1424 a mixed army of French, Italians, and still some Scottish troops, despite King James's agreement, was sent to reinforce Charles by the Duke of Milan, and advanced to the relief of the town of Trean, in Normandy, which was besieged by the Duke of Bedford after having



"THE CORONATION OF HENRY VI., WHEN EIGHT YEARS OLD, 1429." BY S. BEGG

declared for Charles. But the English had taken up so strong a position, that the Dauphin's force forbore to attack them, and turned aside towards Verneuil. Here a fierce battle was fought, in which the total loss of the French and their allies is estimated at between three and four thousand men, while the Duke of Bedford had purchased the victory with the lives of sixteen hundred of his followers—a proportion not unlike that which distinguished the great victory of Agincourt. But this victory of Verneuil, the last important success of English arms in France, brought no permanent advantage; and for the general defection of the foreign allies, which now began to turn the scale of victory, the Duke of Gloucester must be held partly responsible, for shortly after the battle of Verneuil, he and Jacqueline landed in France with five thousand Englishmen, marched to Hainault, and attacked the territories of Burgundy's cousin, the Duke of Brabant. For the next eighteen months Gloucester persevered in a contest in which he had no chance of success. Lack of funds, and the growing power at the English Court of his rival, Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, presently induced him to return to England, leaving Jacqueline behind. She fell into the power of the Duke. Soon afterwards the Pope annulled her marriage with Gloucester, who showed his acquiescence in the papal decision by marrying Eleanor Cobham, the heiress of the house of Sterborough.

Probably the Duke of Burgundy was only awaiting an opportunity for seceding from the English regent, and found his excuse to withdraw his forces in the necessity for protecting the Duke of Brabant's possessions.



"THE YOUTHFUL HENRY VI. WELCOMED INTO THE CITY OF LONDON AFTER HIS CORONATION, 1429."
BY E. H. CORBOULD.

The Duke of Bedford, left largely to his own resources, was not in a strong enough position to follow up his military successes, and for three years the war dragged on its existence, with occasional sieges and skirmishes of no permanent importance; and Bedford was even able to leave his post of command and journey to England to take part in a political crisis arising out of the Duke of Gloucester and Bishop Beaufort.

When Bedford returned to France, in



"YORK AND LANCASTER." BY JOHN PETTIE, R.A.

The tradition goes that Richard, Duke of York, plucked a white rose in the Temple Gardens, to be the symbol of his party's strife against the Lancastrians, on whose behalf the Duke of Somerset then gathered a red rose. From the picture in the collection of J. G. Fenwick, Esq.

1428, this ambitious priest left England with him, to learn at Calais that he had been made a cardinal. Bedford's reappearance at the seat of war was the signal for the siege of Orleans, which lasted throughout the winter of 1428–29, and brought into undying fame the peasant girl known as Joan of Arc, whose romantic story was recently set forth in these pages, with reproductions of the many pictures it has inspired.

The protracted siege of Orleans, by which the English army carried the war into the French royalists' country beyond the Loire, had come to be regarded as the turning point of the long conflict, and the relief of Orleans was the first object of the mission which Joan of Arc represented herself as divinely inspired to fulfil. The rumours of her supernatural appointment to save France from foreign conquest revived the decaying patriotism of King Charles's troops, and enthusiasm for her mysterious personality added many new recruits to his cause. With an army of seven thousand men, "The Maid" marched to Orleans, and managed to convey provisions into the beleaguered town by boats, the passage of which so large an army was able to protect from the besiegers' interference, Joan herself also entering the fortress with reinforcements. Unable to



MARGARET OF ANJOU, QUEEN TO HENRY VI.

From an old painting in the collection of the Earl of Orford.



JOHN, DUKE OF BEDFORD, SON OF HENRY IV., YOUNGER BROTHER OF HENRY V., REGENT OF FRANCE FOR HENRY VI.

From a drawing in a manuscript prayer-book presented by himself to Henry VI., and now in the collection of the Earl of Orford

reduce the town, the English abandoned the siege and withdrew to Jargeau, where they were promptly attacked by Joan and her supporting army, and obliged to retire towards Paris. At Patay they engaged in battle with the pursuing force, and were defeated with heavy loss. The English strongholds of Auxerre and Troyes submitted to the royalist troops, and, conducted by the warrior "Maid of Orleans," as she was now called since her relief of that city, Charles was able to enter Rheims, to be crowned there with much pomp and circumstance.

Ill-supported from England, where the party strife centring round the feud between the Lord Protector and the ambitious Cardinal Beaufort dwarfed the importance of foreign warfare, the Duke of Bedford was now in a position of rapidly increasing difficulty and weakness. The French royalists' army was now vastly stronger than the English, but the latter still occupied the capital, and, even in the absence of Bedford and his force in Normandy, managed to hold it against an attack led by Charles and "The Maid," and the regent returned to Paris to find Charles retreating across the Loire, and to be rejoined by the Duke of Burgundy. Joan's mysterious success deserted her in the following year at Compiègne, and she



"JOAN OF ARC, THE MAID OF ORLEANS." BY FRANK CRAIG.

Reproduced by permission from the picture purchased for the Nation by the French Government.

was taken prisoner while trying to rally her defeated force. On the representation of the Bishop of Beauvais, she was tried for heresy and witchcraft at Rouen, before himself and representatives of the Inquisition and the University of Paris, and, after a trial which lasted sixteen days, she was burned at the stake on May 30, 1431. Considering the cruelty and injustice of her sentence, one is glad to remember that all her judges were French, not English. Some quarter of a century later, the process of her trial was revised, and her condemnation reversed by order of the Pope, as some attempt to do justice to her memory, and in our own time that attempt has found further expression in her solemn beatification by the Church of Rome. Modern interest in her extraordinary career has even included some doubts whether it was actually Joan of Arc who perished at Rouen, or whether it was not some unknown victim of the Inquisition who took her place, the Maid herself surviving in obscurity to a far later date; but it seems practically certain that the recorded story is the true one.

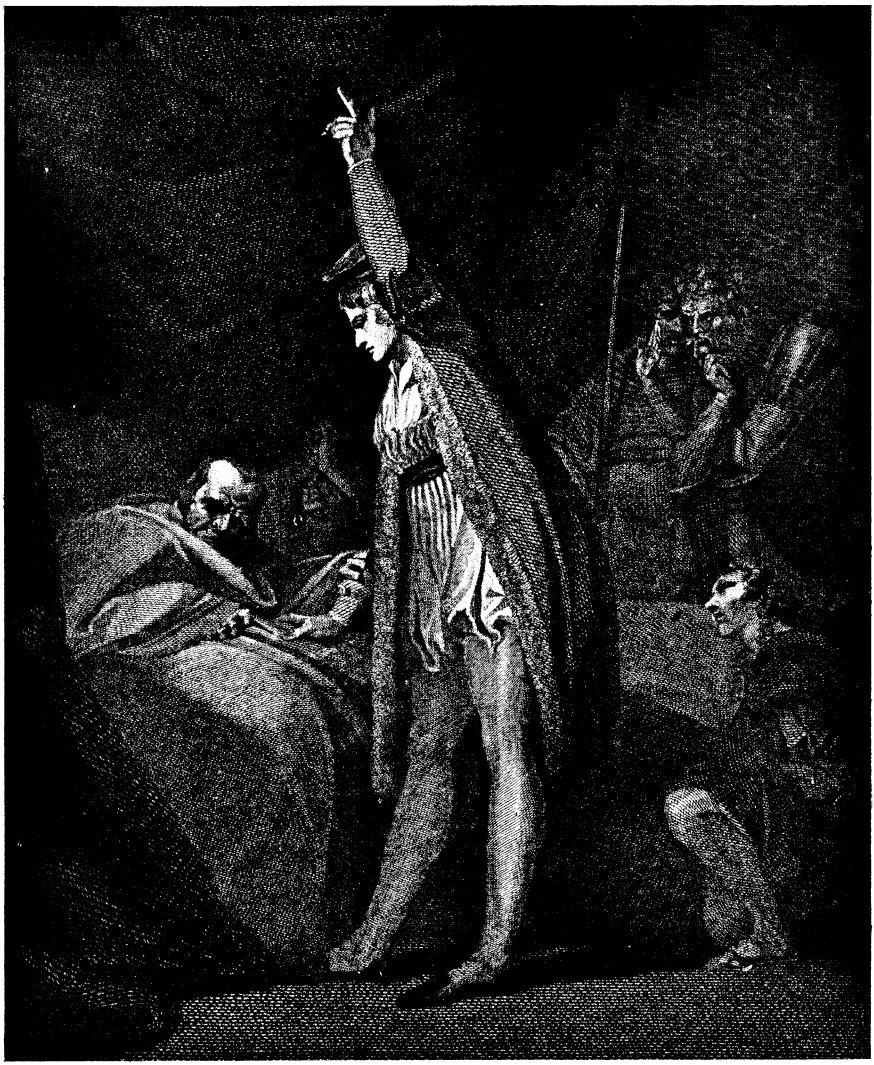


"THE MARRIAGE OF HENRY VI. AND MARGARET OF ANJOU, AT TOURS, 1445." BY JAN MABUSE.
From the original in the collection of the Duke of Sutherland.



"THE MURDER OF HUMPHREY, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, 1447." BY SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A.

In the autumn of the same year, 1431, Paris being still the capital of France, though held by the English, the ten-year-old Henry VI. was taken thither from England and solemnly crowned King of France in Nôtre Dame Cathedral. But this insistence on the English right to the throne counted for far



"THE DEATH OF CARDINAL BEAUFORT." BY H. FUSELI.

less than it would have meant some years before. The heroic Maid of Orleans had perished ignominiously, but not before she had fulfilled her self-proclaimed mission, not merely by her victories, but by her reviving effect upon the patriotism of her countrymen. With that revival it was no longer a question of policy or treaty providing for the succession to the throne of France, but a new ambition of "France for the French, and down with foreign usurpers!" The English cause languished, the great regent's health was broken, and he was again severed from the Duke of Burgundy by the latter's dis-approval of his marriage with Jacquetta of Luxemburg. A peace conference at Arras in 1435 resulted in nothing but the final secession of Burgundy from the English side into an alliance with Charles, and, before the conference was over, the Duke of Bedford died at Rouen.



"LORD SAYE AND SELE BROUGHT BEFORE JACK CADE, 1450." BY H. STACY MARKS, R.A.

The Duke of York succeeded to the regency in France, and the war dragged its slow length along without any great achievements by either side. In 1440 the English retook Harfleur, but the next year this gain was counterbalanced by the French capture of Pontoise. At last a truce for twenty-two months was arranged between the two countries, and with that interval our attention may be transferred from the story of English arms in France to that of the party-politics which made England itself a scene of turbulence and strife.

Henry VI. was still a minor, and both his Council and his Court had long been swayed this way and that by the swelling ambitions of the rival factions of the Lord Protector, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and the scheming Cardinal Beaufort. But in 1445, the truce between England and France still being in force, the cardinal and his party outvoted the Protector, whose influence was already waning, and arranged the marriage of the young king with Margaret, daughter of the Duke of Anjou, and niece of Charles VII. of France. The new queen speedily developed a talent for politics, which might have been put to better use than it was throughout the remainder of her weak consort's long reign. From the outset she leagued herself with Cardinal Beaufort, his nephew, the Duke of Somerset, and the Earl of Suffolk, to overthrow the Protector, Gloucester, and between them they arranged his arrest on charges of high treason. Within three weeks of his arrest, with the charges still unproved, Gloucester was found dead in his bed. Officially it was given out that he had died of apoplexy, but it was commonly believed that he had been murdered by the connivance of the queen and her favourite, Suffolk, who, with the royal consent, took possession of the dead duke's chief estates. What part the crafty Cardinal Beaufort took in the destruction of Gloucester is not definitely known, but, by a curious coincidence, he died within a few weeks of his life-long rival in statesmanship. Shakespeare presents us with a grim picture of his brain-tortured yet impenitent end, and those who have seen his death-bed misery expressed on the stage with haunting realism by his only modern impersonator, Mr. F. R. Benson, will not easily forget the passing of the unscrupulous prelate, whom the historian Hall describes as "disdainful to his kin and dreadful to his lovers, preferring money before friendship."

Both Gloucester and Beaufort being dead, the Duke of Suffolk headed the queen's faction, but made himself extremely unpopular with the country generally by his arrogance and avarice; and it was now added to his misdeeds that, through his rash and unpatriotic cession to France of both Anjou and Maine as part of the marriage settlement which he had arranged between Henry VI. and Margaret of Anjou, Normandy was laid open to invasion by Orleans, and finally lost to England. In 1450, Suffolk was arraigned by the nation on charges of treason and corrupt practices; and when the king and queen sought to save him from any worse fate by banishment, his vessel was stopped before it reached Calais, and he was beheaded at sea, but by whose authority was never known. A month later came the insurrection headed by Jack Cade, to whose list of popular grievances about taxation, extortion, and other wrongs was added a demand for the dismissal from office of all kinsmen of the late Duke of Suffolk; and as this rising was thought to have been fostered by the Duke of York, it is possible that he knew more about Suffolk's death than there is any record to show.

The ensuing year, 1451, brought the lamentable end of English hopes in France, hastened by Suffolk's surrenders of territory, for now Guienne, too, was lost, after three hundred years, and of all the possessions inherited or purchased with English blood from the days of Henry II. onward, Calais alone was left. Queen Margaret's party became more and more unpopular with the nation, and thus began the definite emergence of the Duke of York into an opposition leadership, which was presently to precipitate the long civil strife between the Houses of York and Lancaster, known as "The Wars of the Roses." From February to December, 1454—the king's first publicly admitted period of insanity—the Duke of York governed the realm as Protector, the Duke of Somerset, as head of the queen's faction, having been impeached and imprisoned in the Tower of London. Upon the partial recovery of the king, however, York resigned, and Margaret's favourite, Somerset, was restored to power. York withdrew to his country seat, where he armed his retainers, and ascertained that he had the support of a number of his aristocratic adherents, among them the Earl of Warwick, the Duke of Norfolk, and the Earl of Salisbury, who presently joined him in a march towards London, with a force some three thousand strong. The king and queen left London with an army to meet the rebellious lords,



"THE SOLILOQUY OF HENRY VI. DURING THE BATTLE OF TOWTON, 1461." BY WILLIAM DYCE, R.A.

From the original in the collection of Sir John Pender, K.C.M.G.

and the two forces fought at St. Albans, the first actual battle of the fierce and blood-stained period of the Wars of the Roses. The Lancastrians were routed, with a loss of about "six score," to give the number as stated in the Paston Letters by a member of the family who took part in the battle. Among the slain was York's long-time rival and enemy, Somerset.

After the battle, Parliament appointed York again to be Protector; but within a year Queen Margaret regained her ascendancy in the State sufficiently to induce Henry to dismiss York from office, and for the next two years the queen and her favourites governed the country.

In that interval York increased his popularity by repelling a Scottish invasion, and spent the rest of his time away from Court, consolidating his alliance with the great house of Warwick and other nobles who were opposed to the queen's faction. All of them, however, were convened to London in 1458 by the queen herself, for the purpose of a general reconciliation; but soon afterwards correspondence was busy among the Yorkists on a project for dethroning Henry, who was intermittently insane, and altogether incapable as a ruler, and restoring the crown to the hereditary line from which it had been diverted when Richard II. was succeeded by Henry of Lancaster instead of by the Earl of March, the descendant of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, an older son of Edward III. than was Henry of Lancaster's father. This older branch of descent from Edward III. was now represented by the Duke of York.

Owing to the hostility of Queen Margaret's party, the summer of 1459 saw York and his adherents once more taking up arms. When the Earl of Salisbury marched with a large force to meet the Duke of York, he was met at Bloreheath by Lord Audley and an army raised by Queen Margaret, and, in the battle that ensued, the Lancastrian forces were defeated with heavy loss. But disunion among the Yorkist leaders led to the dispersal of their troops, and York and his sons retired to Ireland, Warwick and Salisbury withdrawing to France, where the former was Governor of Calais. By the following year, however, Warwick returned at the head of an army, to which further recruits flocked so readily that he passed through London with twenty-five thousand men, met the royal army at Northampton, and there defeated it and took the king prisoner, the queen and her son escaping to Scotland.

Three months later the Duke of York formally claimed the crown, and, after much legal discussion, Parliament proposed that Henry VI. should remain king, but that, after his death, the succession should revert from the Lancastrian line to the House of York. King Henry himself agreed to this compromise, but his strong-minded queen would have none of it. Her husband's weakness might play into the hands of his enemies, but must not be allowed to alienate her son from the succession or herself from the government. The House of Lancaster still had many loyal subjects, and Margaret rallied them so successfully that she was able to inflict a crushing defeat upon the Yorkists at Wakefield Green, and in that battle both York and Salisbury lost their lives.

But a month later, however, his father's defeat and death were avenged by York's son, Edward, Earl of March, with a signal victory over the Lancastrian forces at Mortimer's Cross. The queen, meanwhile, had been nearing London with another army, and defeated a Yorkist force commanded by the Earl of Warwick, who, in his flight, was obliged to leave behind his royal prisoner, King Henry. Thus reunited to the king, Margaret had Edward, now Duke of York, outlawed; but the metropolis and the home counties were so largely Yorkist in sympathies, that king, queen, and prince had to seek safety with the Lancastrian nobles of the north. Thereupon Edward, Duke of York, entered London, and was proclaimed king as Edward IV. amid scenes of great enthusiasm. Three weeks later the dauntless Margaret was defeated at Towton, and the war was apparently over; but in 1464, three years after Edward's coronation, she was again in arms, but was finally defeated at Hexham, and lived in exile with her son in France.

Even ten years after Edward's accession the unfortunate Henry VI. was dragged forth from the seclusion of the Tower and placed once more upon the throne by Warwick, "the Kingmaker," who had quarrelled with Edward IV. and transferred his allegiance to the deposed king; but Edward's victories at Barnet and Tewkesbury finally disposed of the last remnants of the Lancastrian cause, and soon afterwards the death of Henry VI. in the Tower was announced. Foul play was suspected, and rumour ascribed his death to the hand of Richard "Crookback," afterwards King Richard III. Shakespeare accepted this version of the hapless Henry's end, but actual record gives us no such fact.

THE MISSIONER.

By EDITH C. M. DART.

IT was the preacher at a children's service on the sands, to which Ernestine had by chance strayed, who put the idea into her head. An idea had only to be implanted in that fertile little brain to grow, like Jack's beanstalk, in a single night.

The sermon dwelt on the influence of children, and wrought, with its perfervid eloquence, so that the child was seized with the desire to start as a radiating centre straight away. She was so full of the new idea that she had finished tea before discovering that it was a special one in honour of Aunt Cicely's birthday, the heroine of the day being herself out for the afternoon.

There was never room for more than one subject at a time in Ernestine's head.

The two people whom Fate had put close at hand to be influenced were, unhappily, unavailable. Aunt Cicely invariably treated things serious, or things her small niece thought such, as a huge joke; and Sarah Ann was yet more impervious. She always argued, and, if worsted in that process, ended by forcible scorn for any novel process whatever.

Her own household were plainly hopeless. A further field for proselytes must be sought. She surveyed it mentally, from Sammy Tapper, at the general shop, to the butcher's boy, who was often rude to Sarah Ann. Neither captured imagination. Ernestine climbed to the top of the low garden wall, the end that was out of sight of the house.

"Squawk!" croaked a harsh voice at her elbow. A big raven settled a few feet off, and regarded her with solemn, flashing, light blue eyes.

A sudden inspiration came. She laughed, and the raven echoed her rudely.

"Gruffy!" she said to herself. "Why didn't I think of her before?"

Gruffy's real name was Mrs. Gryffiths. She was the raven's mistress, whose tall, red Georgian mansion was visible from each of the White Cottage's windows.

Their grounds adjoined, only the Croft was a big house in a big garden, and the White Cottage a tiny cottage in a small one. Gruffy was the standing example to the whole neighbourhood of incivility, unfriendliness, and general unneighbourliness. She neither entertained nor paid visits, but lived alone with her band of old servants; and nobody, except Dr. Andrews, who knew everything and told nothing, was acquainted with aught more of the morose personage than the sight of her at church of a Sunday, or driving in her antiquated carriage, in which she took daily airings.

To soften Gruffy and turn the unsociable old creature into a kindly, hospitable one—here was a mission indeed!

Ernestine gloated over the prospect until bed-time, and long before Sarah Ann's uplifted voice rang in the evening air, she had mentally reached a point wherein Gruffy was a willing penitent, and Ernestine presiding missioner.

While her nurse brushed the abundant flaxen locks, she kept silence with difficulty. Sarah Ann, who knew what silence denoted, asked in vain.

"Whativer new caper hast thee got up to now, Miss Ernestine, I'd just like tu knaw? Zome old nonsense thee's bin zot there a-hatching of." Ernestine itched to confide, but, with a dignity that cost as dearly as dignities perforce must, only muttered an inarticulate dissent.

"I was only thinking of—er—something," she added feebly.

"Thinkin', indade! 'Tis wore out yer little brains 'ull be wi' zo much o' thickey old puzzlin's. I dawnt hold wi' zich meself, addlin' up a body's wits"—Sarah Ann's view of brains being that of delicate organs unfitted for constant usage.

Sleep overcame the laying of schemes, even missionary zeal vanished, and before her nurse's stolid tread had ceased resounding in the passage, the flaxen head nodded and heavy-lashed lids lay quiet on the sunburnt cheeks.

"Blessed little crittur!" remarked Sarah

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Ann to cook, over their supper. "I'll worn there's zommut brewin' in her precious head. I niver come across her ekal for takin' up wi' new notions, of her own making up. 'Tis tu much tu her own self as thickey child is let be, zo 'tis! If only Miss Cicely was tu have half so much mind to her sister's chile as her own pleasurings, 'tis less o' these here fancies the little maid would worrit her head over, I thinks meself; but zay a word, and the young missus hath nort but a soft spaich and a bit o' nonsense for answer, zo there a body be, zameways as aforetime."

It was an agreeable fact that Ernestine often felt, without definite understanding, that Sarah Ann's sharp tongue and manner covered an interest in her small charge that she concealed as it had been a secret sin.

Fate, whom, by a series of happy accidents, Ernestine had got into a way of regarding as her accomplice in many delicate matters of life, favoured the embassy by means of a careless newsboy. Inside Aunt Cicely's favourite society weekly was discovered the austere and cultured *Athenæum*. There was no need for Ernestine to spell the difficult name twice over to discover that it was a stranger to the White Cottage. Looking at it closely, she found a scrawl, which was the newsboy's version of "Gryffiths," and her eyes grew bright.

"Gruffy's paper evidently left here in mistake. Let one of the maids take it across, my chicken. I expect the old lady will be wanting it for her Sunday reading." Aunt Cicely tossed the paper over, and her niece took it with ready hands.

"I'll take it in a minute." Ernestine waited until her aunt had gone out—she did not want criticism or explanation—then she picked the biggest and reddest of the wealth of clove carnations that bloomed in the gay little, ill-kept garden, and arranged them in the long-handled basket with red ribbons, that one of Aunt Cicely's many admirers had offered his tribute in the week before. Then, changing her mind, she took the flowers in her hand and prepared to attack Gruffy's stronghold at once. Aunt Cicely had dubbed her Gruffy, and the name suited so irresistibly that everybody used it, even the Vicar, although he corrected himself usually with an apology.

Although the gardens joined, the houses were at some distance apart, for Gruffy's big house stood in big grounds of which the cottage touched its extreme limit.

It was a very beautiful garden that lay within those tall red-brick walls, and on this July afternoon at its zenith of beauty. Rows of Madonna lilies stood in white avenues against their length, lavender bushes thrust up their grey stalks with faint blue tips, sweet williams, cornflowers, poppies, and sweet peas blazed up the long borders like gorgeous ribbons of colour over a flowing green robe, tall trees cast inviting shadows and patches of cool shelter from the hot sun. The close-cut sward was cut into terraces and steps; from out tangles of purple clematis and white climbing rose bushes gleamed the stone face of a nymph, a wood-dryad, or a satyr.

Ernestine walked slowly along, to enjoy the beauty of it all. She had often heard people lamenting the secluded tastes of the mistress of this lovely spot, who never admitted visitors to the place, nor entertained her neighbours from one year's end to another. Nobody called a second time at the wide front door, with its flight of dazzling white steps and heavy brass handle shaped like a lion's head. It stood open to-day, a brass peacock acted as weight. The child pulled the bell with some effort; the noise of it clanging through the stillness of the big, quiet house set her in a flutter. The reproving stare of the sombre butler, who looked down upon her without a word, finished the overthrow of her courage.

"I'm so sorry! I never thought that it would ring away like that," she gasped, as the bell drowned her small voice. "Please give this; it was left at our house in mistake, tell Gruffy." Then, realising her own awful frankness, she took to her heels and ran as fast as her fleet young feet allowed, down between the lime avenues and out of the iron gates, for dear life.

It was all very well for the preacher on the sands to talk of "missions of influence," she reflected sadly; attempting such was a very different matter, and she doubted but she would never pluck up her courage to make another try.

It was humiliating, but Ernestine kept the whole affair to herself, for even worse than defeat would be the laughter of Aunt Cicely and the vehement scorn of Sarah Ann.

It was a fortnight later that the mediæval carriage, with its old coachman in rusty livery and hat, and pair of bays, rumbled across the downs in front of the prospective missionary's course. She blushed to her eyebrows, and did a compromise between indifference and politeness as it went past. She stared after it in defiance of all Miss Barker's precepts. The green umbrella of



"Ernestine walked slowly along, to enjoy the beauty of it all."

the solitary occupant was lowered, and its point gave a vigorous poke in the ribs to the driver. He pulled up, and a scrap of their conversation floated to Ernestine on the still afternoon air. She did not intentionally listen; there was no help for her hearing.

"Thickey little maid just passed? Ees vay! Thickey's the wan, I reckons—her wi' the yaller hair an' long legs, mum."

Then the wide-bodied vehicle, with its shagreen linings and yellow wheels, was turned slowly round, and in a brief, agonised flash the child saw that escape was too late.

Before she knew, she was answering questions addressed to her in a gruff, authoritative voice. Then the large, black-gloved hand turned the handle, and Ernestine mounted the step and took the proffered seat.

Aunt Cicely stood in the middle of the sunny road and dropped her dainty muslin skirts in the dust in her surprise at the spectacle that met her gaze along the road.

The familiar violet feathers on Gruffy's bonnet seemed to nod defiance as they went by. By her side, sitting bolt upright on the extreme edge of the wide seat, was the small person of her niece, in the shabbiest of frocks and gloveless, with an expression in which triumph and nervousness were curiously mingled. She shot a swift smile at her astonished relative as the carriage went by and in at the Croft gates. Aunt Cicely picked up her pink skirts, shook the dust out of them, and went home to ask the meaning of it all. But Sarah Ann was as ignorant as herself, though in confessing it she directed a thrust at the irresponsible guardianship. Aunt Cicely fanned herself with her gloves, and said it certainly was the quaintest thing she had encountered for a long time—the sight of that child beside old Gruffy; but what they were playing at she couldn't for the life of her see, and if Sarah Ann didn't send in tea soon, instead of looking as grave as a church over a trifle, she should expire without more ado.

Visitors put an end to the talk.

Meanwhile Ernestine was undergoing a catechism at the Croft. She sat on a shiny horsehair couch in a cool, sparsely furnished room, whose chief impressions were, to the observant pair of young eyes, those of gleaming mahogany surfaces, sombre furnishings, and many family portraits in tarnished gilt frames. She knew they must be such, for she could trace in one, over the mantelpiece, the ancestral wart of that fronting her on her hostess's firm chin.

"So it was you who brought me those flowers the other day, eh?" the old lady asked abruptly. "Why did you?"

The question—in fact, the whole incident—reminded Ernestine of "Alice in Wonderland." She stopped herself just in time from replying "Why not?" and answered more politely and intelligibly.

"They were so nice this year, our clove carnations; I thought you would like some."

"I never allow flowers in my rooms—a most unhealthy practice."

The remark was somewhat crushing, but something in its tone was kinder than itself.

"How funny! We have flowers all over the house. Aunt Cicely fills every room in the summer."

"So I should expect." And there was a grim note that made the child get away from the topic of her relative's tastes forthwith.

The first shyness of the interview was wearing away. For all the reputation of its mistress, and the unfamiliarity of this dim, unmodern room, there was a sense, too elusive for the child-mind quite to fathom, that told her she was not unwelcome. She could not remember later of what they spoke, or how the half-hour went that the slow clock ticked away with loud insistence.

When she got up to say "Good-bye," Gruffy scorned the small outstretched hand.

"Tut, tut, what's your hurry, child? It isn't every day in the week that brings me a visitor. It isn't often that I want one, to tell the truth; people bother me. If I wanted them, I should have them, I suppose. One usually gets what one wants in this world."

Ernestine believed the possessor of that mouth and chin probably did. She said so, or at least implied it in her fervent "I expect you do, ma'am."

The old woman's eyes twinkled.

"So will you, as you grow older, if you make up your mind to pay the price. That's where the rub comes in. Folks say they want this or they want that, and then they cry out at having to pay for it. You will find out, as you grow older, child, that you can get most things that your heart is set upon, if you pay for them. Whether they are what you fancy beforehand is another question — another question quite, though people may lump them together in their usual blundering way." Ernestine did not understand this talk at all. It was over her head, and as she watched the vacant eyes and look of her companion, she knew that she had forgotten the years and identity of her listener entirely. She was accustomed to patience, so waited quietly until she should be remembered, without thrusting her presence upon the other.

A blot of black shadow fell on the patch of sunlit carpet by the window, a harsh croak sounded from without, then a sharp, powerful beak tapped on the lathes of the drawn shutters.

"Go away, Elijah—go away! It is not your tea-time yet!"

Elijah's mistress came back to reality, but the insistent bird croaked on in his strident fashion, in a way that Ernestine secretly admired. It was so courageous in the face of that command.

"The only thing belonging to me that I can never teach obedience to," she remarked, with a twist of humour about her grim lips. "Most people here—in fact, all of them—do what I wish."

comfits on the top, then she said "Good-bye!" and went across the faded carpet to the heavy door with brass trellis-work panels and a drop handle.

"You have forgotten to tell me your name." The question made her pause.

"Ernestine—Ernestine Manvers, ma'am."

"What a mouthful! Well, you can come and see me some other afternoon soon, Ernestine, if you like. Don't tease Elijah on your way down the drive. If he pecks at your skirts, he means no harm. He



"The first shyness of the interview was wearing away."

"I don't wonder!" Ernestine interrupted instinctively. This time the grim mouth laughed outright at the emphatic tone.

Later, a tray of refreshments was brought, and the visitor, much too diffident to protest, drank rhubarb wine from tall-stemmed wine-glasses that would have gladdened a collector's soul to behold.

It was very "burny," as Ernestine confided to Sarah Ann afterwards, and it made her throat ache, but she drank it chokingly and ate biscuits with caraway seeds and pink

will not hurt you if you don't him. Good-bye!"

Ernestine's friendship at the Croft was regarded as a huge joke at home. Aunt Cicely chuckled over it until bed-time, while even Sarah Ann condescended to inquire as to how the house was kept, and if the parlourmaid with carroty hair, who went to her chapel, opened the door. Ernestine revelled in her fame, and when she recollected that missionary zeal had been all forgotten in the interest of the new

acquaintance-making, she felt a pang of reproof. She resolved to commence at her very next visit.

All through the summer the friendship progressed. There was no demonstration about it, and after a time even Aunt Cicely came to take it as a matter of course that, when lessons were over, Ernestine should go across, with no more preparation than the clean face and pinafore that Sarah Ann always insisted upon.

Long before the summer was done, Ernestine gave up the idea of the preacher on the sands. She realised, in her child's shrewd, indefinite fashion, that Gruffy's gruffiness was chiefly an impression conveyed by a rough voice, large front teeth, and a wart on the chin; but she never thought of speculating as to the sort of pleasure her own vision brought to the recluse. She never dreamed that the barrier that years of isolation had raised between her friend and the outside world was pierced in a slight measure by her own talk and daily gossip of the people of her small world. For Ernestine was the type of being who, without being inquisitive, owns the liveliest of interests in the affairs of other people. She chatted, unreproved, of Aunt Cicely's gay doings and Mrs. Tapper's misfortune at the general shop, of Sarah Ann's family and the histories of each member, as familiar to the child as her own uneventful one. She told of godfather in India, and of mother and father too. The old lady sat in her armchair and knitted the while, or they went round the garden together, with Elijah after them.

Gruffy knew the whole history of the red-haired curate's *affaire*, and his threat to blow out his brains on the downs if Aunt Cicely refused to marry him—a direful resolve that filled her small niece with terror until she heard the next week of his engagement to the seventh Miss Sobey, who taught in the Sunday-school—a peaceful if unromantic ending to the whole matter. Gruffy sniffed sometimes, or made inarticulate sounds of disapproval, at reminiscences of Aunt Cicely.

On wet days, when the garden was impossible, she was allowed tours of inspection through the many unused rooms, each kept in immaculate order, with their atmosphere of other days, their faded hangings, dim water-colours, silhouettes, miniatures, and treasures of china and glass mingled with terrible mid-Victorian atrocities of blue rep and wax flowers. Nothing was explained to her, and after the first question, which met with a curt "Don't be inquisitive, child. I don't like prying folks," Ernestine asked no more. Instead of questions, she settled her curiosity by "making up" about the men and women, slim, sloping-shouldered girls with ringlets and meek looks, and men in absurd raiment and awkward attitudes. She decided that the little girl whose silhouette hung in the drawing-room, with a painting as well, must have been Gruffy's little daughter. She was not at all the sort of child to stimulate imagination; she was skinny and rather cross-looking—perhaps "it was only her looks," her observer remarked mentally—and from her full, short skirts protruded very long, thin legs with wide undergarments that hung below them. Ernestine thought that she must have been the original owner of the clockwork figures under a glass shade—a man who beat his wife, and a lady and her gallant who danced a minuet with a stiff creaking of rusty wires when they were wound up.

When she was tired of wandering through the big house, she came back to her friend, who ignored her presence or let her chatter, as her mood was. Ernestine brought all the family excitements to the Croft, and it was surprising how much interest could be both expressed and understood by an inarticulate grunt or brief comment. It was a tale of Aunt Cicely that brought about the only break in the happy companionship of the oddly assorted pair. Ernestine was describing, with her feminine delight in detail, the frock of lilac muslin with lace ruffles that was to be worn at the Vicarage garden-party that afternoon. Gruffy sniffed and made a remark to the effect that some people were fond of dressing-up like "play-actresses" instead of modest young women. The child flared up in vehement defence.

"Hoity-toity, there's a tirade! Well, your empty-headed aunt owns a champion of her own, if not common-sense. That's right—stick up for your own idols, child, if they have got clay feet. I wish, though, you had something more worthy of your heroics than a pretty toy whose head is only big enough to hold her own——"

This was beyond endurance, and the child departed home in a fervour of righteous wrath and roused affection for the sprightly, pretty creature who ruled her small destinies so irresponsibly. She followed her that evening with eyes of such devouring adoration that even Aunt Cicely observed the highly strung condition. It made her feel positively uncomfortable, she averred, and she was quite

sure that Ernestine must want either a change of air or a dose of senna, for her eyes were growing too big for her face. As the last alternative was the least trouble to render, senna tea was the remedy, which turned a situation of some delicacy into one of prosaic reality. The sufferer felt that it was a little hard for the object of her championship to reward her thus, and her depressed thoughts turned again to Gruffy, and the apology which she felt the morrow would wring from her readily enough. The old lady received it with a chuckle of enjoyment which the child reflected would have been deeper yet, had the senna incident been revealed to its primary cause.

It was Sarah Ann who told Ernestine of the doctor's visits to the Croft—"Old lady, most-like, took off suddint, come tu last," she prophesied cheerfully, amazed at the storm of grief her words aroused. Sarah Ann felt it was no more than decent sympathy to look for the very worst ending to every illness.

Without waiting to discuss the point, the child started off to see for herself, and was so consoled by the sight of a familiar, uninvalidish face, and sturdy pooh-poohing of the notion of serious illness, that she was comforted at once, and in a child's light-hearted fashion gave the affair no more thought. Sometimes she met the doctor in the drive. They were always good chums, with many thoughts in common. Ernestine was very fond of this omnipotent, quiet, kind-eyed man, who listened until one had finished what one had to say invariably, and never teased when people were really in earnest.

The two grown-ups sometimes talked of the only visitor the Croft received. Opinions of Aunt Cicely and her unfitness as a guardian were spoken unreproved, if unanswered, and theories advanced that would have roused the subject of them to fury.

Doctor was less didactic. "Oh, I don't know! That kiddie is the sort that a little wholesome neglect never harms much. She's a rum, affectionate little creature, with her head stuffed full of the quaintest notions possible. I am glad she is with you often, now especially." The sick woman did not answer, but there shone a sudden gleam in the heavy eyes that spoke without words to the intelligent beholder.

"Don't let anybody tell the child," she said, speaking after a few moments' silence. "Remember, I will not have her know what is coming." It was the only reference he ever heard made to the rapidly approaching end they both awaited.

So the daily visits went on just as usual in the gloomy parlour, and the child babbled away on all subjects in heaven and earth, ate comfit biscuits, fed Elijah, and turned over the big "Pilgrim's Progress," with its wonderful black-and-white pictures. Sometimes she was sent from the room suddenly, with a message to amuse herself in the garden or under the verandah. When she was called back, there was usually a pungent smell of smelling salts or sal-volatile, and the big black fan with mother-of-pearl sticks revolved steadily in the large veined hands of the mistress, who sat upright in her chair, with compressed lips and tired eyes.

Ernestine thought sometimes of her original scheme for the regeneration of Gruffy. It seemed so impertinent now; and, besides, she admitted to herself, its need had vanished, too, for she accepted without hesitation the problem of personality that often floors an older mind. She liked her, she told herself frankly, "like she was," and she knew that her liking was returned. Sarah Ann shook her head more gloomily every day, and hinted at the impropriety of visiting the Croft so much "as things was." The doctor's low cart turned in twice a day now, and the visit was longer each day.

"Ought you to have her about now?" he asked once, as his coming dispossessed Ernestine from the parlour. The doctor watched her tripping across the close-cut sward, with Elijah making stray pecks at her flapping white pinafore. The bird hopped after her in his absurd waddle, following the child everywhere in and out of the walks. Gruffy smiled as the spectacle was described to her, the solace of many moments of pain she owed to the pair. The doctor repeated his question.

His patient made a gesture of impatience. "Where's the harm?" she asked. "Elijah likes her here, and she's a quiet little creature. Besides, it won't be much longer, eh?"

The question was ignored, but the doctor changed his tone. "It's only you I was thinking of; and if she—if anything helps you to forget, if only for a few moments, it is indeed worth while." The old woman turned away from the pity in eyes that had witnessed so much of human pain and yet never lost sensitiveness at the human spectacle.

"Maybe," she said briefly, then began to talk indifferently of something else.

"She's an old Trojan to the very end,

without a murmur or crying out once, all the way through. There's nothing like the courage of a strong woman, save that of a weak one," and the doctor went from his paradox to his other patients.

The doctor came to the White Cottage to tell the end that had come mercifully at the last in sleep. The child cried against his shoulder. He waited some time. They talked of their mutual friend. It eased the full little heart to talk. She told of how of late she had been often called "Sophy." It was the name of the little girl with corkscrew curls and long pantaloons; then she told of her first idea in making Gruffy's acquaintance, and the preacher on the sands who started the whole affair. It comforted the sad heart to pour it out, and the doctor stayed quietly listening to it all, because he knew how she felt about it.

"I don't think she ever knew how much I liked her, because, although we talked a lot, we never seemed to come so that I could say that."

"I think she knew all right, and, after all, we never do talk about the things we think most of, do we? It's mostly little potty things that don't matter a hang that we jaw so over, eh?"

The slang brought a comforting touch of everyday into the strain of grief and strangeness. Ernestine gripped his hand gratefully. "I am glad you think she did know. I just can't tell you how glad—I just can't tell you!"

She wiped her eyes openly and blew her nose; then the doctor took her away with him on his morning rounds.

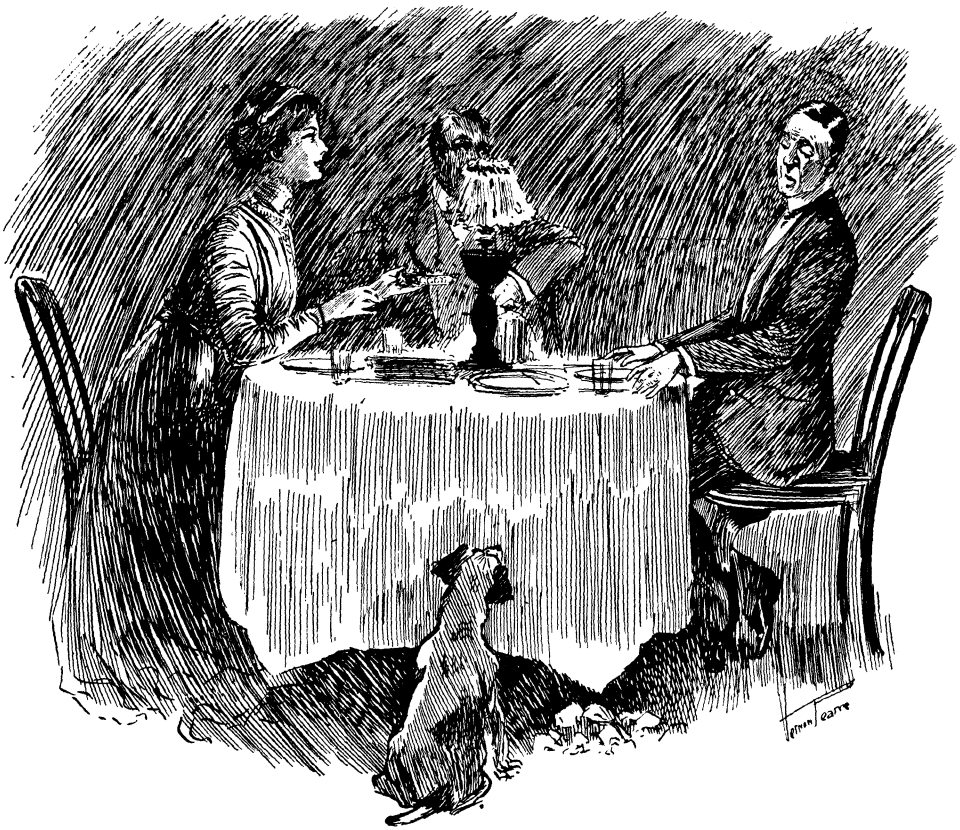
Ernestine's legacy was Elijah and a case of specimen butterflies nearly as big as the White Cottage itself. Aunt Cicely says they will have to build on a wing to accommodate them. Sarah Ann objects to Elijah as the most "distructive crittur iver reared," but the butterflies are her untiring admiration.

TO AN EXPERT WINDOW-CLEANER.

INGENIOUS athlete, hitherto unsung
By bards immortal, let me sing you now!
To your tremendous skill I humbly bow,
Surpassing far the efforts of my tongue.
Oft have I gazed while you have deftly clung
To nothing, yet with calm, unruffled brow,
Poised on a lengthy ladder (Heaven knows how),
With but one toe upon its topmost rung.

Though thousands pass, how few, if any, pause—
So slight the notice that your feats engage:
And yet the keenest rapture you would cause
If you forsook the street and tried the stage;
There you would have tumultuous applause,
And forty times your present weekly wage.

HANSARD WATT.



AN AWKWARD POSITION.

Tompkins, who is dining with the newly-married Jones, not being able to masticate the pastry of Mrs. Jones, has been secretly passing it to the dog, but discovers that the animal also has been unable to eat it.

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

"ALTHOUGH he overcharged me, the cab-driver who took me over Paris was most polite," said our friend who had made holiday abroad.

"All Frenchmen are," we observed.

"Yes; but this one got off his box and helped me to find the necessary words in my French-English dictionary, so that I might say what I thought of him."

BROWN: I've been invited to go shooting next week. What ought I to give the fellow that beats up the birds?

JONES: Well, old man, it depends where you hit him, don't you know?

MOTHER: You have one great fault, Tommy. You won't take "No" for an answer.

MODERN CHILD: And yet it was that same trait in father which led you to marry him.

LADY (booking for new musical comedy): I'd like two seats for four weeks from to-night.

BOX-OFFICE ATTENDANT (sternly): See here, madam, you can't go to "The Girl From Over There" on the spur of the moment like that.

BRIGGS: I suppose, if I accept your invitation to go to that dinner, you will want me to make a speech?

GRIGGS: No, my dear fellow. You see, it's this way. Everybody we have invited so far wants to make a speech, and what I am trying to do now is to get together a few listeners.

MANY a man will say, "Yes, I understand," when he thinks you don't know what you're talking about.



TERMINOLOGICAL INEXACTITUDE AGAIN.

ETHEL: Auntie, mummy does not tell the truth!
AUNTIE (shocked): What do you mean, dear?
ETHEL: She says that angels watch all round my bed at night; and how *can* they, auntie, when one side of it is against the wall?

BALLADE OF ALL FOOLS' DAY.

Where is the joke you have saved since May?
Where is the prank that your boyhood knew?
Now is your golden chance to pay
Old scores off that have troubled you.
Have no fear of the thorn and rue;
This is the day when the old grudge dies.
Elect yourself to the merry crew—
This is the day when folly is wise!

For once in the year you may have your way,
If sane, for once you may waive the clue;
Your freedom lasts for a golden day,
And all may quaff of its elfin brew—
There are things "not done" you now may do.
Make haste—the day too quickly flies—
The whole world now may be turned askew—
This is the day when folly is wise!

When the sweetest tune an ass may bray
Will pinch the prima donna's shoe;
When colours that once were mauve and grey
Are changed to those of a brighter hue,
These are the hints, you may take your cue,
Don cap and bells as the first cock cries,
Grow young in heart and start life anew—
This is the day when folly is wise!

Envol.

Prince and pauper and flirt and shrew,
All who are sad have done with sighs,
Go crowned with a paper cap of blue—
This is the day when folly is wise!

"I UNDERSTAND," said the magistrate, "that you stole the watch of the doctor who had just written a prescription for you at the free dispensary. What have you to say to this charge?"

"Well, your honour," said the prisoner, "it is true, but I found myself in a hole. His prescription said a spoonful every hour, and I had no watch."

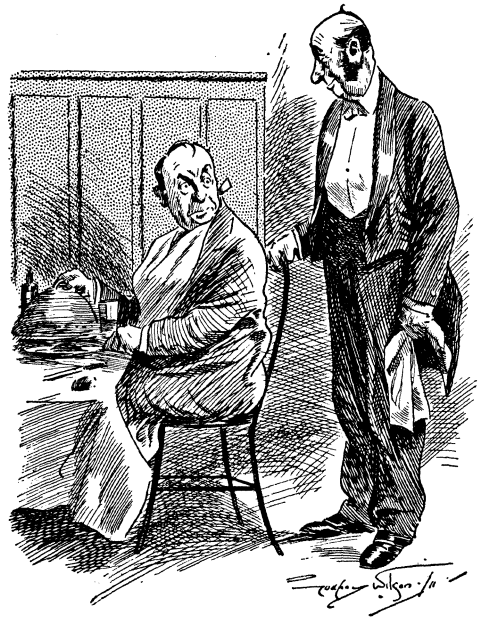
"DID you have any trouble in getting through the Customs House?"

"No internal injuries."

CUSTOMER: In case—er—I should decide not to retain this ring, will you exchange it for something else?

JEWELLER: Young man, it is a good deal easier for you to get another girl than it would be for us to make such an exchange.

HE took a large size in boots, so when he called at the shop to know why his new ones had not been made and sent home, the proprietor of the establishment said: "Well, you see, sir, we have to make them outside, as we haven't room for them in the shop, and the weather has been so bad."



THE ADVANTAGE

CUSTOMER: This stew is simply abominable; it tastes more like—like pigs' food!

WAITER: Ah, there you 'as the hadvantage of me, sir—I've never compared 'em!



A NATURAL MISTAKE.

CHARITABLE BUT SHORT-SIGHTED PATRON: Have you any brown shoe-laces, my good woman.

"Do you think your son will forget all he learned at college?" asked a friend.

"I hope so," replied the father. "I don't see how he can earn a living playing games all day."

A WELL-KNOWN clergyman was one day in a barber's shop, when four or five young men walked in, whom he knew by their voices, but who did not recognise the man in the chair, with lather all over his face. They proceeded to spend the time by telling stories and using expressions which, to say the least, were rather strong. When the barber pulled away the towel, the clergyman, cleanly shaved, stood before them. So nonplussed were they that no one tried to take the vacant chair, and the barber called several times—

"Next gentleman! Next gentleman!"

The clergyman smiled somewhat grimly as he said: "It isn't a bit of use, John. There's not a man here who has the effrontery to answer to that name."

A BAD LICKING.

(A distinguished scientist lately warned the public against licking postage stamps, as the gum, according to his theory, attracts typhoid germs and the staphylococci bacillus.)

My son, lick not the postage stamp
If you'd escape the germ,
And keep alight your vital lamp
Till its allotted term.

Let not your tongue-tip touch the gum,
Or you'll be more than silly,
For sticky stamp-sides fairly hum
With virulent bacilli.

Bacteria are hiding there,
Alert behind the scenes,
And wily typhoid germs prepare
To give the licker beans;

While grape-like clusters start awake—
By name staphylococci—
Whose one ambition is to make
Our epidermis pocky.

Death lurks behind the monarch's head—
This warning don't despise—
One taste may stretch you on the bed
From which you'll never rise.

Lick not the postage stamp, my son,
Or, if you do, you'll rue it.
Still, if it really must be done,
Get someone else to do it.

Jessie Pope.



OBVIOUSLY.

DEALER (to prospective purchaser): Yes, sir, this is the skull of Oliver Cromwell.

PROSPECTIVE PURCHASER: Impossible! Cromwell had a large head.

DEALER: But this was his skull when he was a boy!



THE TIPPING PROBLEM AGAIN.

SHE: The waiter doesn't look very pleased with us. Did you give him a tip?

HE: Rather! Gave him "Skedaddle" for the Grand National.

"WELL, Dorothy, how do you like school?" asked the visitor.

"Oh, so much!" said Dorothy, aged six.

"That's right. And what have you learned to-day?"

"Why," answered the small damsel, "I've learned the names of all the little boys!"

A YOUNG officer in the Army was summoned to answer a charge of assault preferred against him by a sentry. The officer had no recollection of it. The sentry declared the officer was intoxicated.

Among those questioned was an Irish orderly, who protested vigorously that the allegation of the sentry was a slander—that he was sure the captain was perfectly sober.

"Why are you so sure that Captain Blank was sober that evening?" he was asked. "Did he speak to you upon his return to his quarters?"

"He did, sir."

"What did he say?"

"He tould me to be shure an' call him early in the mornin', sir."

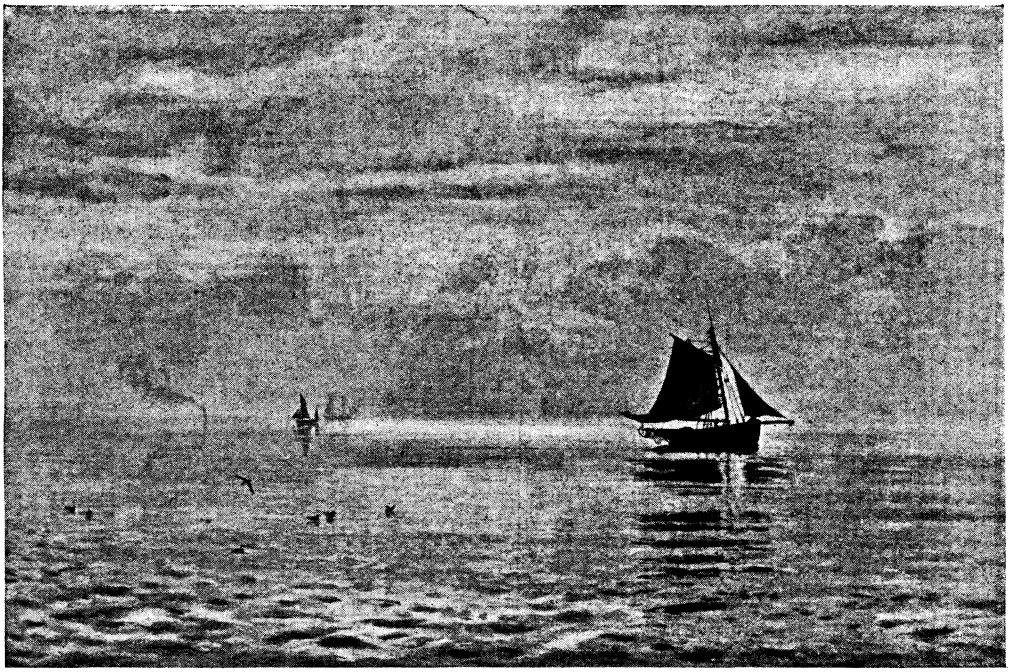
"And did the captain say why he wished to be called early?"

"Yis, sir, he did, sir. He said he was goin' to be Queen o' the May, sir," responded the orderly with convincing gravity.



"THE LIFEBOAT." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.

Reproduced, by permission of the Corporation of Liverpool, from the original in the Walker Art Gallery.



"CALM BEFORE A STORM." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.

From the picture in the collection of Dr. J. Linton Bogle.

THE ART OF HENRY MOORE, R.A.

BY R. C. TRAFFORD.

HENRY MOORE came of a family of artists. His father, William Moore, was a painter of portraits and miniatures of considerable merit, and his mother, Sarah Collingham, William Moore's second wife, was a descendant of that family to which belonged William Hilton, who, in the early part of the nineteenth century, succeeded Fuseli as Keeper of the Royal Academy. Hilton's pictures of "Edith Finding the Body of Harold," "Cupid Disarmed," "Rebecca and Abraham's Servant," and "Sir Calepine Rescuing Serena"—from Spenser's "Faerie Queen"—are now in the National Gallery, thus marking his attainments to have reached a conspicuous level.

Of the fourteen children of whom William Moore was the father, no fewer than five of the sons turned to art as their profession. Edwin and William, sons of William Moore's first marriage, were art masters in the City of York, in which their father lived; but John Collingham Moore, Henry and Albert, sons of his second marriage, sought a wider field for their talents in London, where each made for himself, in different branches of art, a great reputation. Albert found his orbit in the decorative; Henry, it is beginning to be suspected, became the greatest marine painter we have ever had; and John Collingham, although his achievements were less brilliant than either of his two brothers, was a portrait painter of recognised ability.

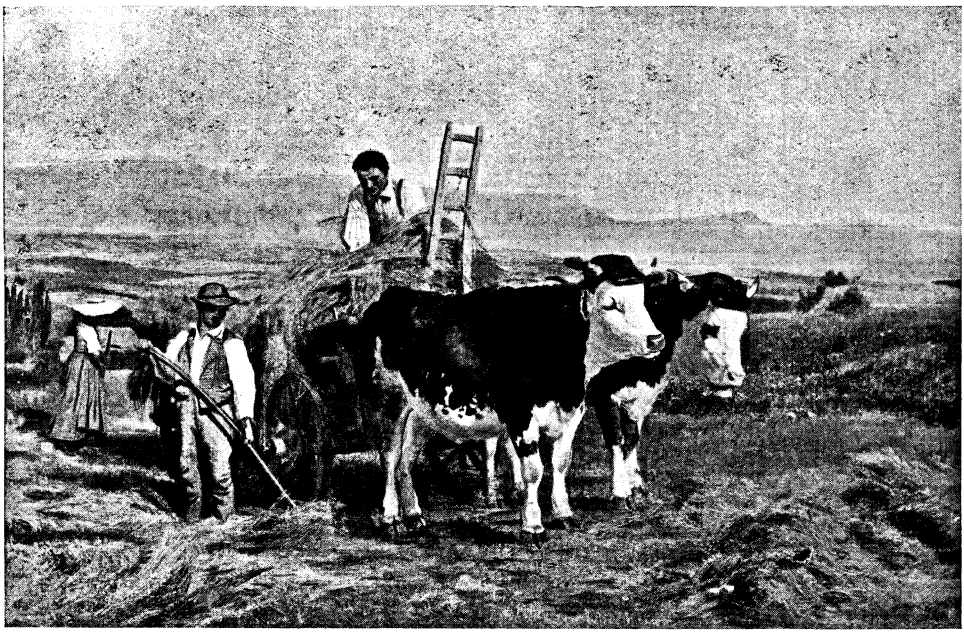
Henry Moore has been more fortunate than many of his contemporary artists, in having been made the subject of a very complete biography by Mr. Frank Maclean, in the Walter Scott Publishing Company's admirable series of volumes on "The Makers of British Art," which also records, in great detail, the exact whereabouts of all the artist's pictures, whether in public galleries or private collections. To this skilfully compiled and very interesting volume we are indebted for some of the biographical and other material incorporated in the present

article, by permission of the publishers. Most of our reproductions are made from the photographs prepared for that volume by Messrs. Walker & Cockerell.

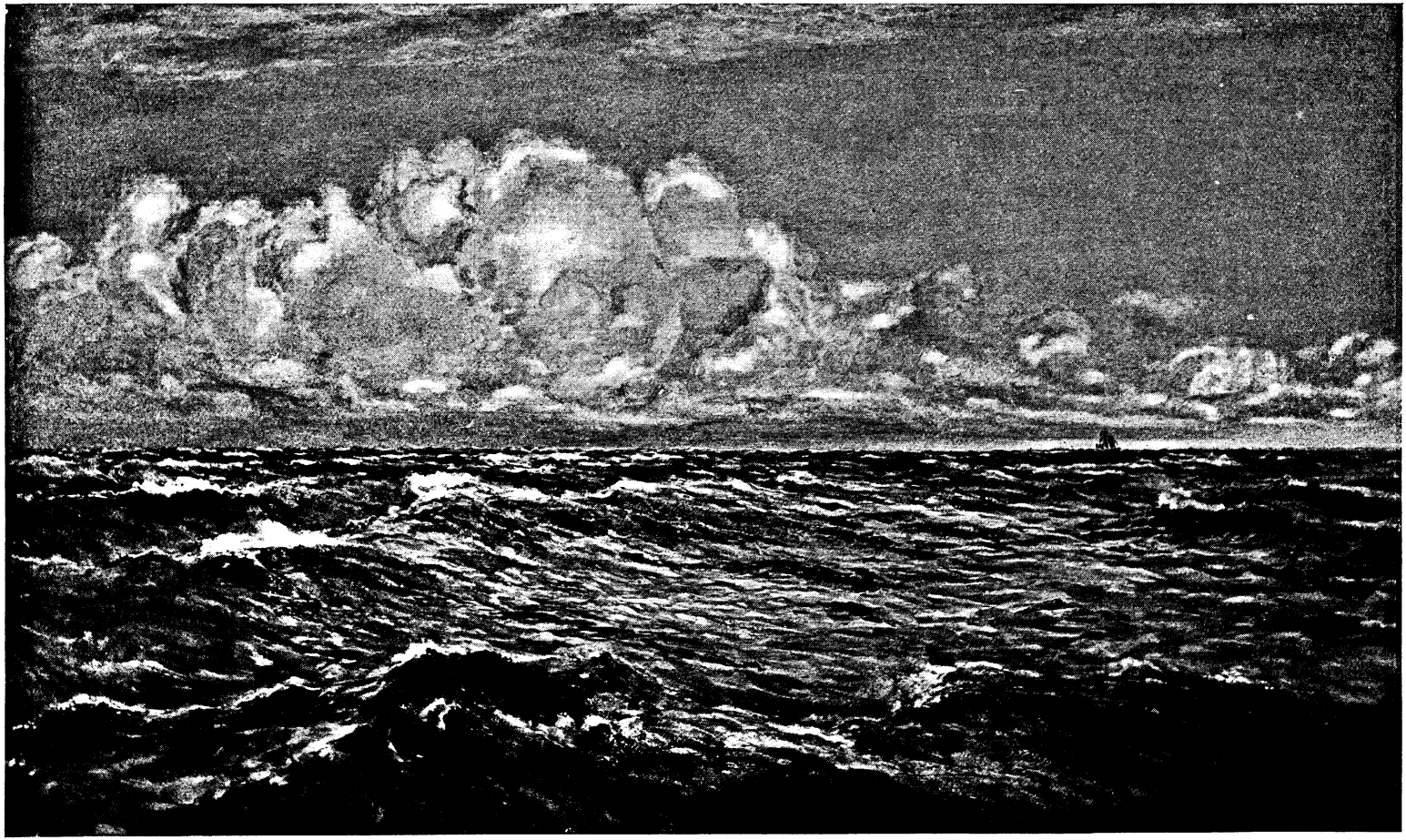
Henry Moore's first instruction in paint came to him from his father and his half-brother William. His actual school-days at York were of short duration, for he left at the age of fourteen, having then already gained a considerable reputation amongst his school-fellows for drawing, especially with his caricatures of those in authority.

From the time he was fourteen until he was twenty, he worked in the shop of a picture-dealer in York, there doing the copying and touching-up required of him, and finding spare time for a large amount of painting on his own account. In his twentieth year—1851—his promise must have been very considerable, for he gave up the emoluments he was receiving at the dealer's—a serious matter in a not too affluent home—and entered the York School of Design. Here he worked for some time, passing his leisure hours in painting from Nature, and this with a so great enthusiasm and industry that he, as subjects, embraced flowers, landscape, and animals. It is not, however, from his landscape, flower, or animal pictures that Henry Moore's talent can be rightly estimated, for he was far less concerned with terrestrial forms than with the wonderful mysterious shapes taken by great waters. Good as each is, these branches of his work show, invariably, endeavour and, on occasion, failure. But it is not with Henry Moore, the landscape, flower, or animal painter, but with Henry Moore, the sea painter, that we have to do. This is the merit and distinction of art—that it allows of our taking the work of a man to its highest point of achievement, and considering all he has done from that point. We must remember, therefore, to be lenient to his other work, for it was upon this he expended his period of tutelage, of tentative expression; whereas, when he turned to that branch of art in association with which his name will live, he had passed the period of hesitancy and uncertainty by which, when a man is in the throes of education, his work is bound to be marked, and attacked the sea as a master who had learned his art, no longer as a student fumbling for expression, as his strength, his style, and his experience were practically complete.

A certain restriction and unity of vision there may have been in his scope of sight, and so, finding the great contrast between land and sky unsatisfactory, he was led to

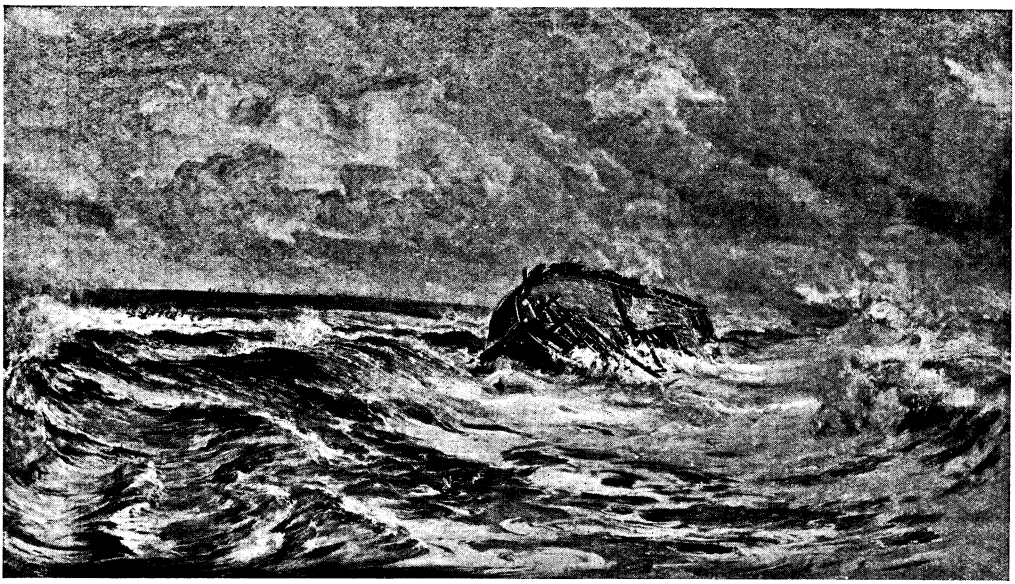


"HAYMAKING NEAR LAUSANNE." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.
From the picture in the collection of the Misses Mudie.



"A BREEZY MORNING." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.

From a water-colour in the collection of Mrs. Luker.

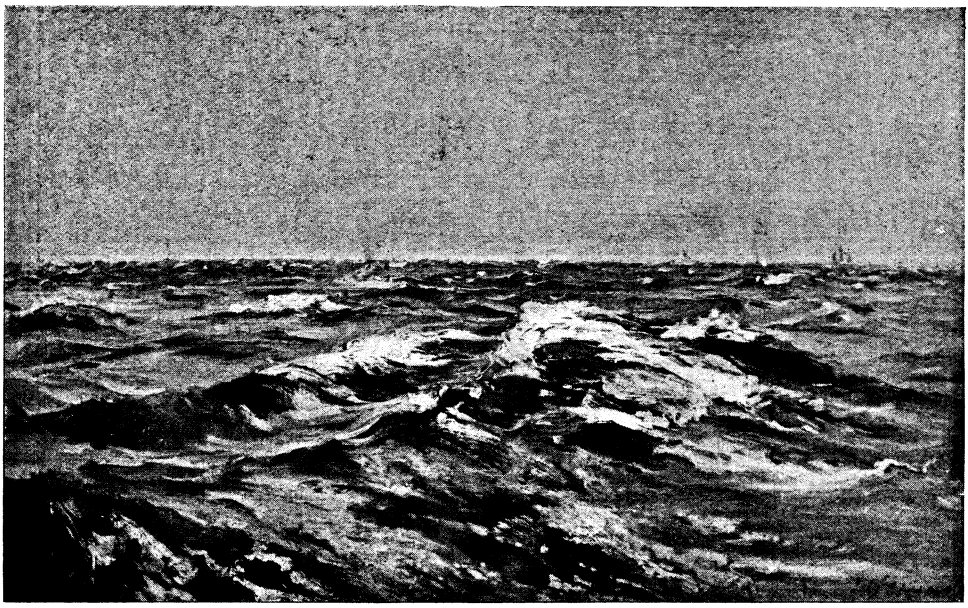


"OUTSIDE THE HARBOUR." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.

From the picture in the collection of George Burnett, Esq.

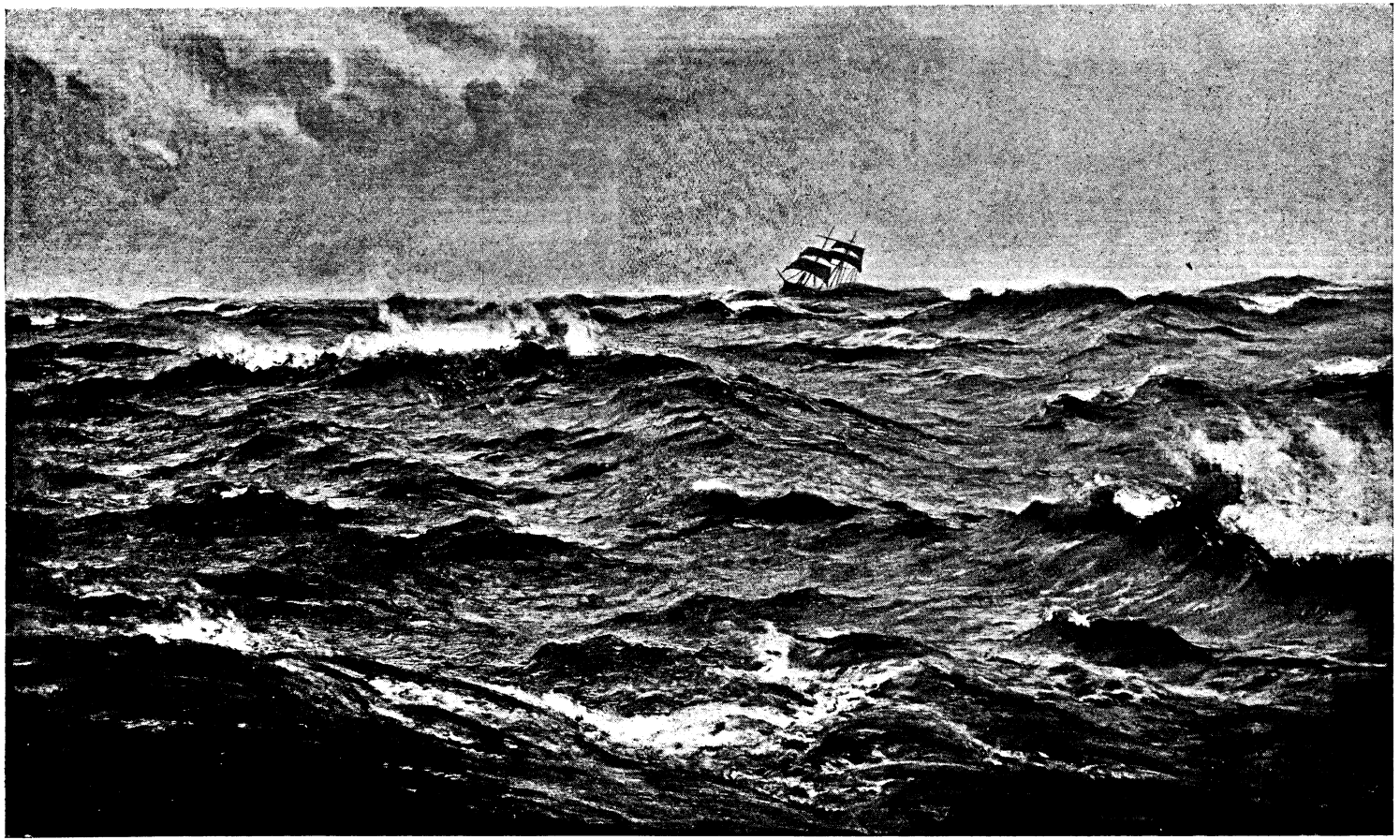
choose that limited octave of blues, merged into red purple, on the one side, and cool greys on the other, which so fully sufficed as vehicle for his talent.

In 1853, when Henry was twenty-two years old, he came up to London and joined his brother, John Collingham Moore. He entered the Academy Schools and exhibited his first Academy picture—a work painted previously at Braemar, and called "Glen Clunie." We hear of him as a capricious visitor to the Schools, and this, obviously, from no idea of holding himself independent of tuition, since not only did he put in a



"TIDE RACE IN A BREEZE." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.

From the picture in the collection of Dr. J. Linton Bogle.



"ROUGH WEATHER IN THE OPEN MEDITERRANEAN." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.

From the picture in the collection of F. W. Gossage, Esq.

regular appearance at the Langham Sketching Club, but he became a diligent student at Leigh's School in Newman Street.

Within quite a short time Henry Moore was exhibiting a number of pictures. In 1855 he had begun to send to the now defunct British Institution; simultaneously he was exhibiting both at the Society of British Artists and at the Academy.

In 1857 he paid a visit to Clovelly, and made his first important sketches of the Bristol Channel. Henry Moore's journal of this date tells graphically of the impression made upon his sensitive artist mind by this visit to Clovelly and the vision of the sapphire waters which wash the Devon coast.

prove Ruskin wrong, Henry Moore's work came to the fore. Moore may not have been a genius, but, within his limits, he was a great painter. He understood the sea; each phase of its history received from him appropriate expression; he wielded the mighty mass so that we appear to see it quiver; and the waves, on occasion, seem to have held themselves poised that he might tell us that which he had learned of them. As he grew more intimate with the vast element, he was enabled to show more and more of its physical perfection, and in his first sea pictures, painted in 1857, to his last, painted in the year of his death, 1895, we trace, by a study of his work, the gradual widening of

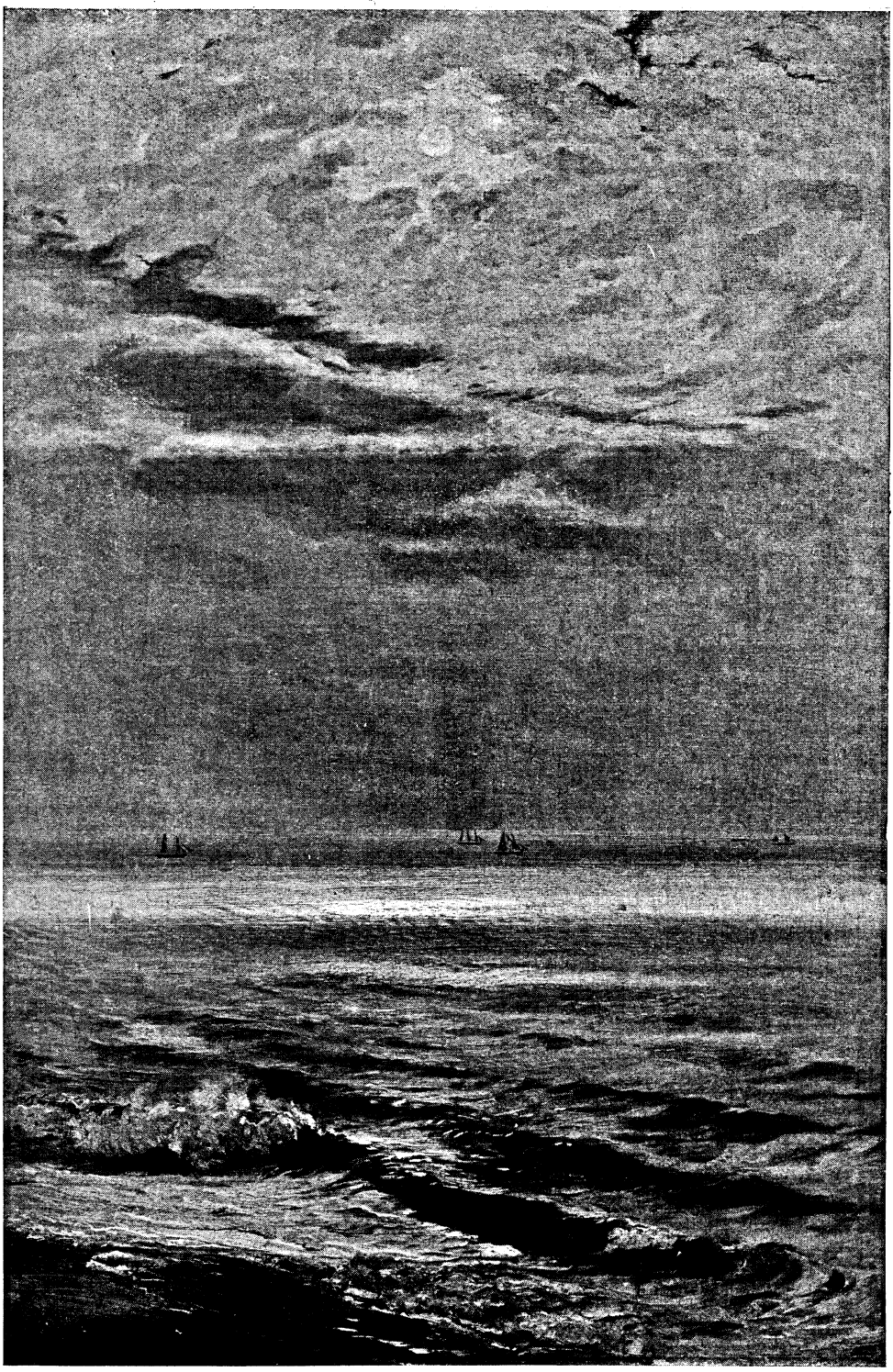


"NEAR POOLE, AFTER A BREEZE." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.
From the picture in the collection of Dr. J. Linton Bogle.

It was not until some years after this visit to Clovelly that he found his true artistic sight, and commenced that series of seascapes which has inspired Mr. Spielmann, in writing of him, to say: "In marine painting no one has appeared to rival Henry Moore, perhaps the greatest student of wave form the world has ever known." And no man, before Henry Moore's advent, had ever painted the sea, as he did, wholly for itself.

Ruskin, many years ago, said: "The sea never has been, and, I fancy, never will be, nor can be, painted. It is only suggested by means of a more or less spirited and intelligent conventionalism; and though Turner has done enough to suggest the sea, mightily and gloriously, after all, it is by conventionalism still." Then, as though to

the doors of knowledge. He knew the many moods of many waters, the ordered irregularity, the lift and cadence, the easy slope of graceful period, the emulative ardour which informs each inrushing wave, their planes and angles. We see where their edge, so often wavering, becomes first trustworthy, then actually impinged, with an insistence that is almost audible, for there is tension in the air, against the sky. Or he shows us the alluring, terrifying, ecstatic moment when, touching the nether side of purpose, it quakes and quivers as though in fear of the imminent immensity of its fall, its coming fusion with other waves. Each occasion was plastic in his hands. He painted the hour of rose-flushed dawn, that of metallic noon, and that in which, at some spur from night, the sea rouses in



"MOONLIGHT." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.

From the picture in the collection of H. Smith Wright, Esq.

quivering eagerness to anger, with a clang of battle in its voice. In "Calm Before a Storm," exhibited in 1882, we have a sea of lost outlines, a sea swayed from inner impulse rather than from outward cause; whilst, in "Clearness After Rain," in the Academy of 1887, a panorama of waves moving forward in a chaunting procession, speaking of friendliness rather than of passion, he shows it an element that is a willing, amenable ally of man's needs.

He was learned in the liturgy of its songs. "O ye seas and floods, bless ye the Lord, praise Him, and magnify Him for ever," is his attitude. Not a single detail of the ocean escaped his intelligence; the breadth and wonder of it seem to have informed him with something of its spacious quality. To the lovers of episodic work his sea pictures were, at first, a sort of caviare, for they appeared as nothing but a section of sea and daylight lifted on to canvas. They were not pictures to "tell" in exhibition. In them he was a rebel against traditions. He denied old idols, failing entirely to satisfy the time's craving for a story, and substituting nothing but Nature in its place. For the sea,



Photo by] [*Ralph N. Robinson, Redhill.*

HENRY MOORE, R.A.

Born 1831, died 1895.



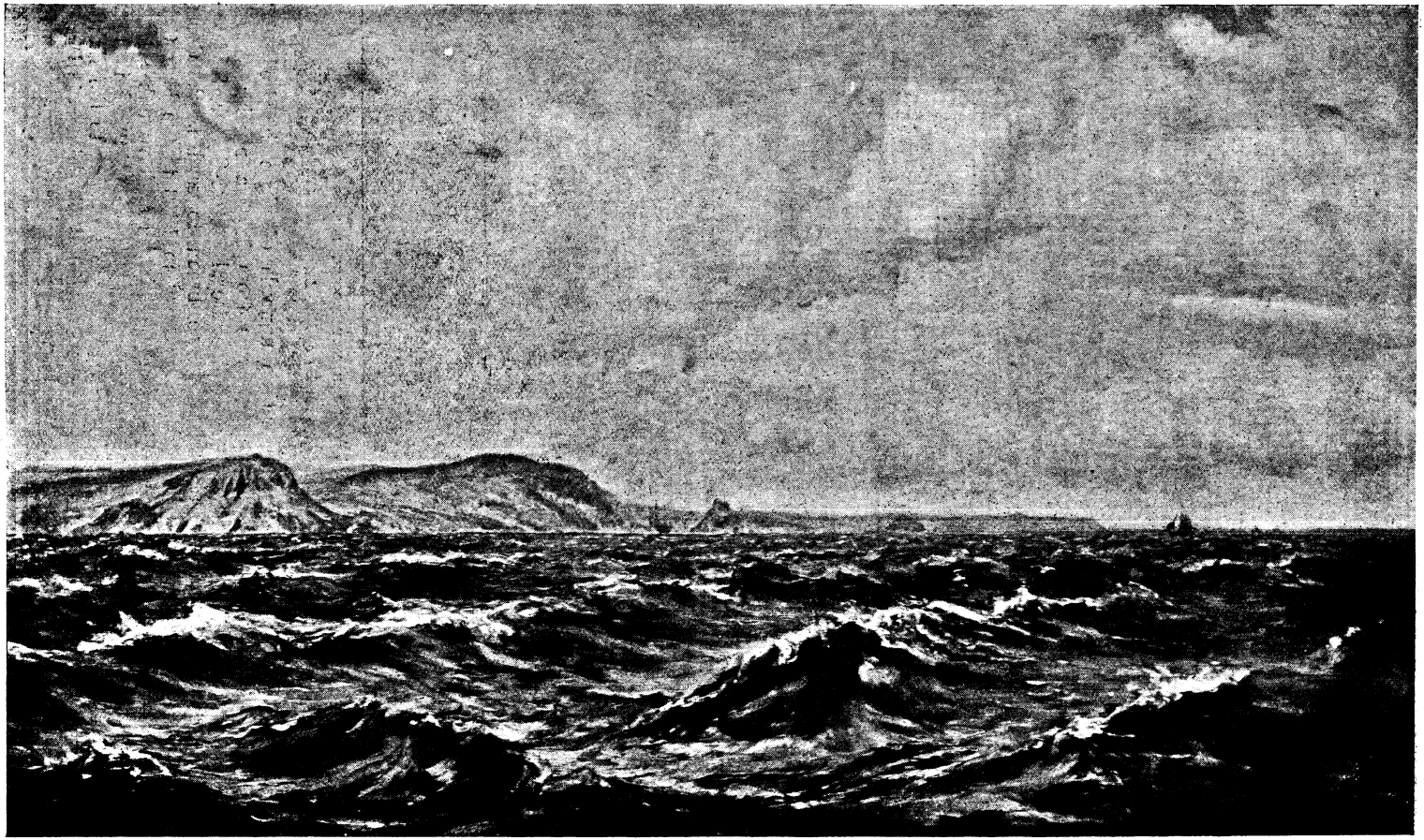
CHRYSANTHEMUMS. BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.

From the picture in the collection of Mrs. Luker.

in fact, furnished him with all he asked, consequently his work was condemned with extraordinary ignorance by his fellow-painters and the public as both new and monotonous.

After showing numerous pictures in the Royal Academy, Henry Moore, in 1872, exhibited a picture called "A Winter Gale in the Channel," and a far-seeing critic in *The Athenæum* of the date—May 11 of that year—wrote of this picture: "The sky seems to labour like the sea, but it moves altogether, so dense are the heavy clouds, so vast their bulk, which the light defines like islands in an ocean. In these elements of design is a marine epic, inspired by poetic power of the right kind, expressive as a masterpiece should be, wrought with the hand of a master, guided by consummate knowledge of Nature, so that what might be called the mighty volition of tumultuous sea is put before us in perfect keeping and homogeneity."

In 1873, after several cruises in British waters, for the purpose of studying the sea in all its moods, Moore travelled by boat from Marseilles to Alexandria. On the way out he painted studies for a picture which he



"OFF GERRANS BAY, CORNWALL." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.

From the picture in the McCulloch Collection, reproduced by permission of Mrs. Coutts Michie.

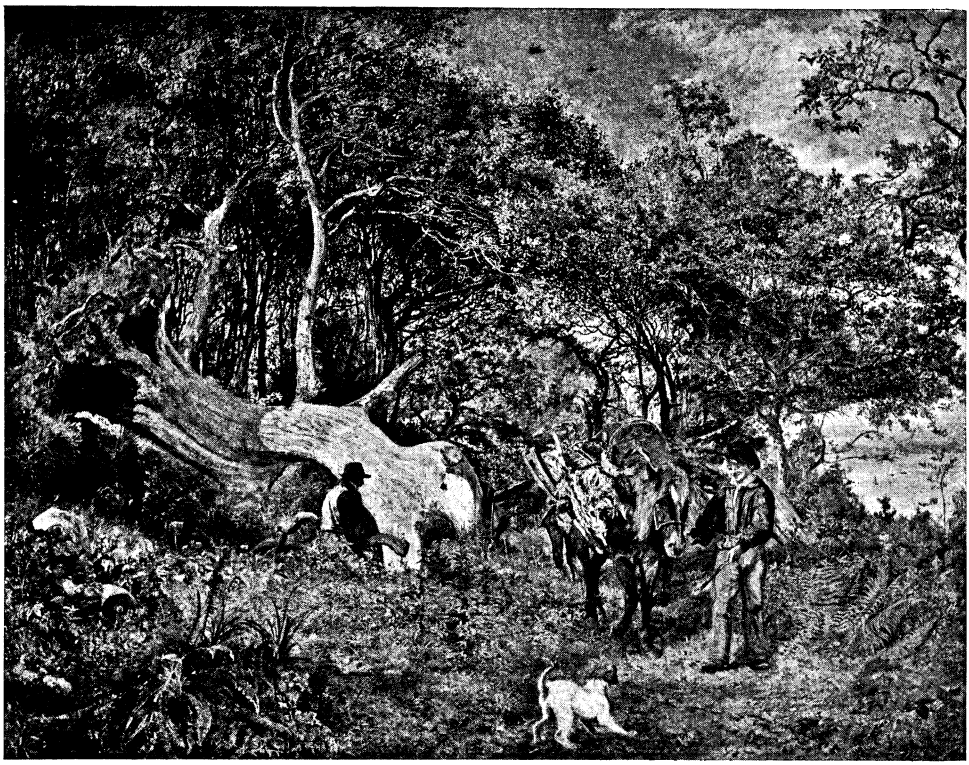
called "The Calm Mediterranean," a picture full of atmospheric effect, and the play of light vanishing in shadows of various depths. The waves dance and sway as though absolutely informed with life. To watch them is to have a physical sensation of their movements. It was with this comely mood of Nature that Henry Moore was in most complete sympathy.

His attitude towards these Nature's happy hours was one of adoration. They exercised over him an effect of magnetism which was irresistible. He had, perhaps, a certain quality of temperament that made him, in them, at one with her. He hit, as it were, upon the authentic plan of the sea's design, invaded separately each secret place, traced the geometric patterns hidden in its heart, unravelled the threads of scum thrown as waste into its trough. Sometimes, too, he sacrificed vision to glamour; then we lose the modelling of the waves, the live, crimped lines, in the shifting shadow of a cloud or the general spaciousness of things.

On the return journey from this trip, he was able, however, to make the studies for "Rough Weather in the Open Mediterranean." The picture painted from these studies was a great success. The transparent atmosphere of storm clouds hurrying in massed squadrons, the wandering cloud shadows, each coign of water vantage carrying its crest of froth, the anatomy of pattern, the mosaic pavement of the trough, vistas of interminable depths—all these suggested qualities are there. The artist reached in this picture the very acme of realism, the last possible stage of observation.

Henry Moore exhibited during his life-time upwards of three hundred pictures. He was from 1876 a regular contributor to the Royal Water-Colour Society; in 1882 he began to send to the Grosvenor Gallery, and in 1888 to the New Gallery; whilst the British Artists numbered him as a contributor from 1853; and in 1883 we find his first contribution to the Exhibition of the Institute of Oil Painters in Piccadilly.

Many honours in his later years fell to Henry Moore. In Paris, where from the commencement his work was always appreciated, he, as early as 1853, received a bronze



"A COAST WOODLAND." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.

From the picture in the collection of Mrs. Luker.



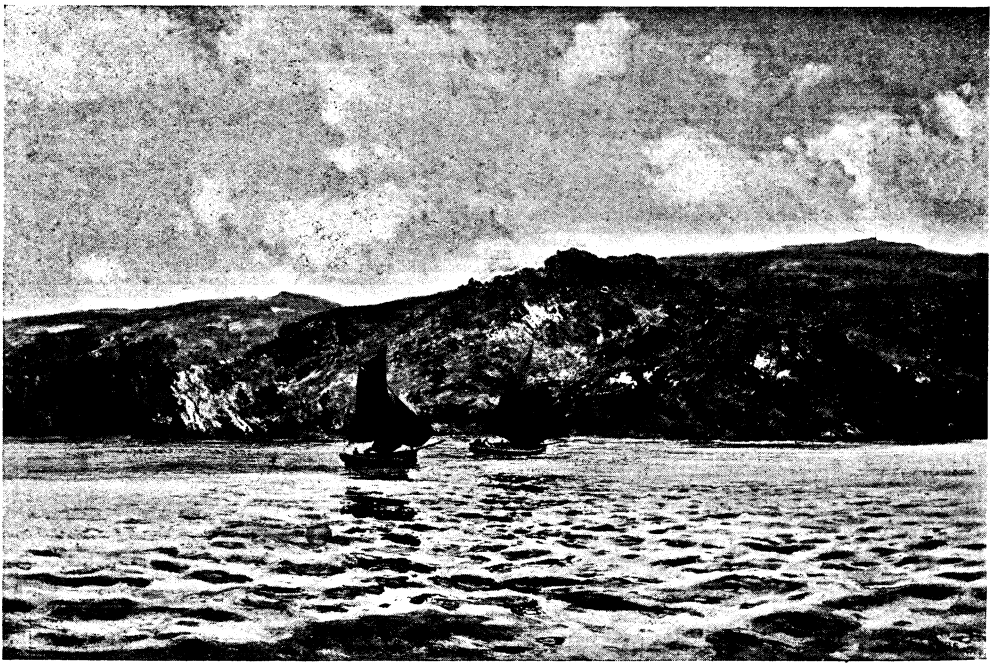
"BRADING DOWN." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.

From the picture in the collection of George Burnett, Esq.

medal at the Palais d'Industrie, whilst, in 1889, he received at L'Exposition Universelle the Grand Prix and also the Cross of the Legion of Honour. He was not made an Associate of the Academy until 1885, although his work had been hung in its exhibitions for thirty-three consecutive years. Eight years afterwards, in 1893, he was made a full Member of the Academic body. Many minor honours also fell to his share. Six medals were conferred upon him between 1876 and 1888, at the Crystal Palace; in 1874 he gained a medal at the International Exhibition at South Kensington, and another, a couple of years later, at the Royal Aquarium. Chicago, Antwerp, and the Fisheries Exhibition, London, also conferred on him medals in the 'eighties.

His pictures are well represented in public galleries. The National Gallery of British Art holds "Catspaws Off the Land," painted in 1885. The Diploma Gallery, "Summer Breeze in the Channel," 1893. Birmingham, "The Newhaven Packet," 1885; "Summer-Time Off Cornwall," 1883; "In the Moray Firth," 1876; "By Stress of Weather Driven," 1879. Liverpool, "A Life-Boat," 1876; "Nearing the Needles," 1888. Manchester, "Mount's Bay, Early Morning," 1886. Oldham, "Westward Ho!" 1893. And York, "Gowbarrow Park, Ullswater," 1854; "On the River Dart," 1866; a couple of early landscapes and two studies of "Hob Moor," Yorkshire.

Henry Moore married, in 1860, Miss Mary Bollans, of York, and lived first in Berners Street, then in Kensington, and subsequently in Maresfield Gardens, Hampstead.



"CATSPAWS OFF THE LAND." BY HENRY MOORE, R.A.

From the picture in the Chantrey Collection at the National Gallery of British Art.

TUVANA.

By JUSTUS MILES FORMAN,

Author of "The Garden of Lies," "The Quest," "The Unknown Lady," etc.

IT was at Haapai, in the southern Tonga group, that we learnt of the death of poor Mr. Arthur—Sir Herbert's and her ladyship's brother, that might have been Sir Herbert's twin, to look at, but wasn't, being some years younger—and of how his body was brought back to Tuvana, the island he ruled over, by the brown men, and buried; and the Harvest Moon, brought back there, too, which had been the cause of his death, and which the Princess Mata wore now round her neck for love and remembrance of him she had hoped to marry.

Sir Herbert decided at once that he must make the pilgrimage to his brother's grave in the cruising schooner we had hired in Auckland. Her ladyship didn't want to go; I don't quite know why, and she couldn't explain. Maybe, knowing that the Harvest Moon was at Tuvana, she was afraid to go there. I can't say. For, of course, ever since we had come south of the Equator, we had all heard about that tremendous, great wicked pearl, that had done so much harm and wrecked and killed so many people—everyone that had ever had anything to do with it. And now it had smashed poor Mr. Arthur, too—or Hayes, as he called himself hereabouts, or Tui Tuvana, as the natives called him. It had smashed him like all the rest, so if her ladyship felt superstitious about the thing, and dreaded to go where it was, I'm sure I don't wonder. But Sir Herbert was a stubborn gentleman, once his mind was made up, and he'd got it into his head that it was a kind of solemn duty to visit poor Mr. Arthur's grave; so we went.

At Haapai we took on board the schooner a brown boy who had been one of Mr. Arthur's people, and we got the bearings of the island and set sail.

We had a fair south-easterly "trade," and lifted Tuvana at dawn of the fourth day. It is a "high" island, but surrounded by a coral reef, as "high" islands sometimes are in these parts, and we dropped anchor inside the lagoon at sunrise.

It made a very pretty picture, I must say—the blue sky and the blue water of the lagoon, and the strip of yellow beach, with palm trees standing thick and close behind, and the little mountain a-towering up overhead. It was as pretty a picture as you'll ever see, even in the tropics; but I was uneasy and cast down, and didn't admire it.

No more did her ladyship, I fancy, for she seemed to be as nervous as a cat in a strange garret—though I'm sure I beg her pardon for using such words of her—and once she said to Sir Herbert—it was while we were in the small boat going off—she said—

"I wish we hadn't come here, Herbert. I'm afraid of something. I'm all creeps." But Sir Herbert laughed at her, and pointed to the shore, where there was a little knot of native people gathering to welcome us.

So we landed at Tuvana, that had been poor Mr. Arthur's home and, as you might say, kingdom.

The people on the beach, when they saw Sir Herbert's face, that was so extraordinarily like Mr. Arthur's, though older and, if I may say so, a bit harder, began to shriek and carry on, and some of them were all for running away, thinking they saw a ghost; but the brown boy that had come with us made a kind of oration, explaining who we were, so it appeared, and then they stopped their noise, but gathered round us, wanting to hold our hands, and grinned and made signs to show how glad they were. Some of them could speak a little English—just single words, like so many of the natives hereabouts, who learn it from the copra traders and sailormen—and these said all the words they knew over and over again, and everybody got down on their knees to Sir Herbert, who didn't like it, and looked very red and uncomfortable.

The brown boy that sailed with us from Haapai had slipped away while we were

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standing about on the beach being made much of, but in a few minutes he came back and made us understand—for he could speak more than a bit of English, too, when he wasn't excited—that the Tua Mata, the queen, or princess, or chieftainess, or whatever you may like to say "tua" means, was waiting to see us. So we went up from the beach and under the palm trees in a kind of procession, the brown people following after.

We went along a sort of lane where the sunlight didn't reach the ground, and past little clean, thatched native huts with walls made out of plaited fibre, and at the top of a slope came to a house like the others, but bigger, and two of its walls were rolled up like the flaps of a tent. I noticed that the native people had stopped a few yards away under the trees, and I wondered why; but after a moment I stopped wondering altogether and just stared, and I dare say my eyeballs was a-popping out like a frog's or a bulldog's.

The Tua Mata was standing in the open wall of that plaited house, alone except that, some distance back in the shadows, there may have been half a dozen other women. And she was like the marble ladies in the picture galleries, if only they were painted a golden brown and had a square of red silk twisted round their hips, so that it fell to the knees or thereabouts. She was far too beautiful, the Tua Mata was, for me to try to describe her. I didn't know brown women could be like that—no, nor white ones, neither, though in my time I have seen a great many ladies who had their pictures in the weekly papers and wore pearls, or even strawberry leaves, and swept about a house like peacocks with the gift of speech.

She was no more than a girl—not yet twenty, I'll swear—but she stood up before Sir Herbert and her ladyship like a duchess in a court train and a coronet, instead of a brown girl in a yard of thin red silk and a trumpery brass locket hung from her neck.

I heard her ladyship give a little cry under her breath, and Sir Herbert, he says aloud—

"By Jove!" Then the Tua Mata, who had been gazing very proud and still out over our heads, looked down at Sir Herbert's face.

She must have seen poor Mr. Arthur, that called himself Hayes, a-standing there before her as if he had stepped out of his grave, for she began to shiver all over, and she turned her head away very slow, and put both her hands up over her face.

It was a terrible thing to see, and much worse than if she had screamed, or wept, or carried on as other women might do. I don't mind confessing that it turned me sick for a bit.

Her ladyship cried out, and went a step nearer to where that brown girl stood. She put her arms about the girl's bare shoulders, and she says—

"Oh, my dear, we're his brother and his sister! Won't you welcome us for his sake?" Nobody could ever resist her ladyship when she spoke like that—not even the Tua Mata, who turned her face for an instant to be kissed, and then hid it on her ladyship's bosom.

But presently she stood up straight again, and you would never have known that anything had happened. She said in very good English, but queer sounding, that no doubt Mr. Arthur had taught her—

"I bid you welcome," and stretched out her hand to Sir Herbert; but she didn't look at him again just then.

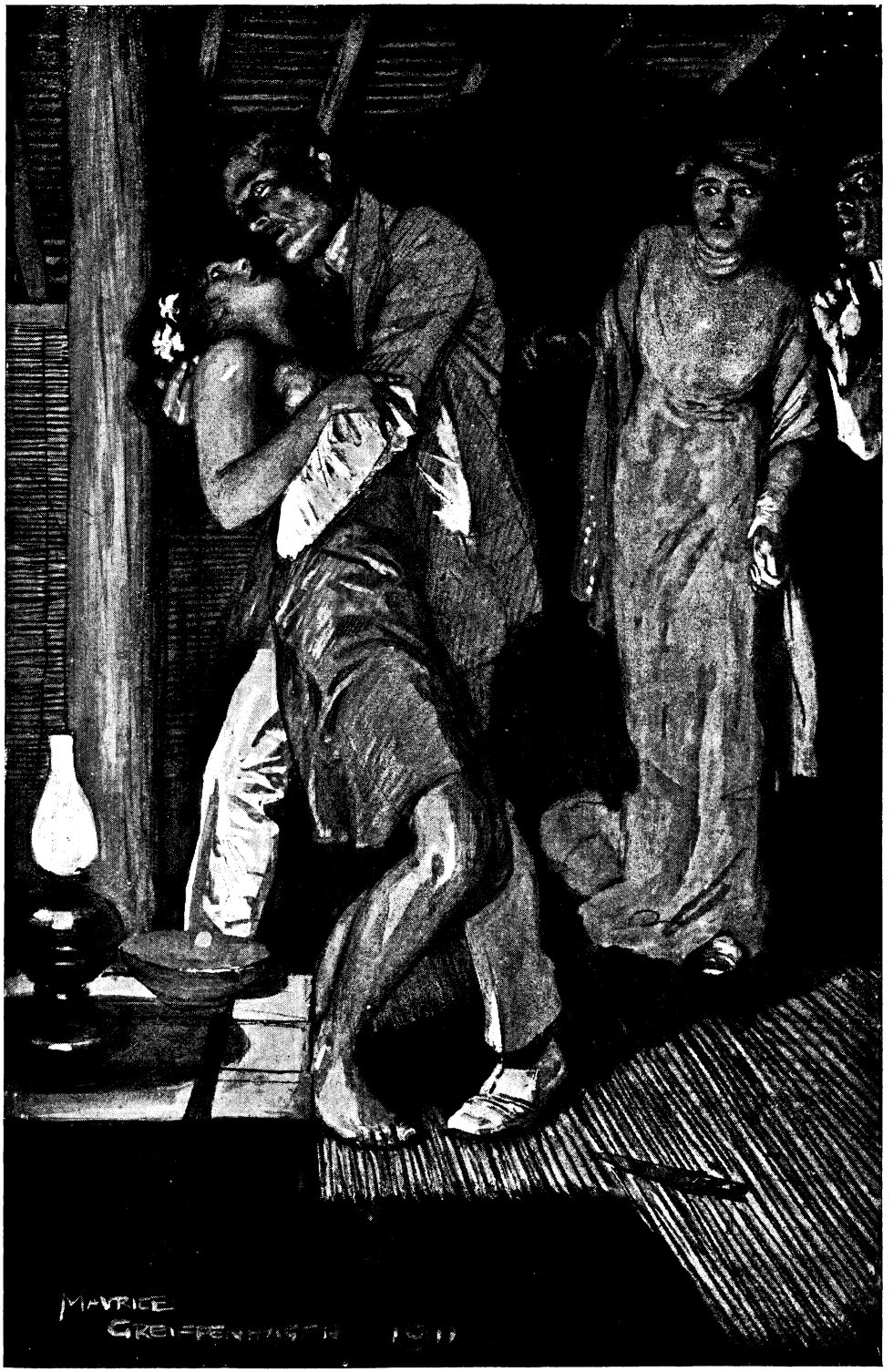
I saw Sir Herbert hesitate as to what he should do, then he bent over and kissed the Tua Mata's hand, and I was glad.

* * * * *

I find it isn't nothing like so easy to write about things as I thought it would be. If I should try to set down here all that happened in the ten days Sir Herbert and her ladyship and I spent on Tuvana, it would take me a month or even more. So I must pick out, if I can, the most important things, and let the others go, though it seems a pity, for now I shan't be able to tell about the feasts, and the kava drinkings, and the native dances—which were very stirring indeed, and gave you little thrills like soldiers marching past to music—and the picnics, and the fish-spearing in the lagoon of a starlight night.

The first very important thing that happened seems to me to be the visit we made—Sir Herbert and her ladyship, and the Tua Mata and me, and a dozen of the natives—to Mr. Arthur's grave up on the mountain-side above the village. And it seems to me important, not on account of poor Mr. Arthur—or Hayes, if you like—but for another reason altogether.

It was a long climb up a rough path, and we made it in the cool of the day, just before sunset. But when we came out at last on the little spur of the hillside where the grave was, a-looking over the sea, it was worth all



"He held her against his breast, calling upon her."

the heat and the work, and more too. It was the finest place to be buried in I ever saw or ever shall see.

The grave had a flat square mound of shaped stones above it, and two poinsettia trees stood beside, so that there was a great mass of blazing crimson over Hayes's bones. And on the flat mound they'd laid, native fashion, the dead man's belongings—a pipe and a tin of Latakia tobacco, and a little round American alarum clock, and three pairs of boots, and a razor, and a leather belt, and many other things that I've forgotten.

The natives, all but the Tua Mata, hung back amongst the trees as the rest of us stood about Mr. Arthur's grave, and her ladyship went down on her knees and, I think, said a little prayer. But Sir Herbert and the Tua Mata stood across from each other, with the grave between them, and the Tua Mata's eyes went from Sir Herbert's face down to the big stones that covered what was left of the man she'd loved, and back again, and then once more down and back, and, after that, they stayed upon Sir Herbert's face, who didn't notice, I fancy. But I did.

I noticed, and watched both then and afterwards, and cursed the day that had brought us to Tuvana, and felt as sorry for that slip of a brown girl, with her big, troubled eyes, as if she had been my own daughter. For it was easy enough to see what was going on in her mind. She was as simple and open as a little child. She had loved poor Mr. Arthur, and she loved him still. No one who wasn't a fool could doubt that. I've never in my time observed a heavier grief than she carried about with her—never. In all those ten days I don't recall seeing her smile—a proper gay smile—or hearing her laugh. But here was Mr. Arthur come again, risen from the dead, and who was to tell that child, as knew nothing whatever about the world, that Sir Herbert wasn't the homeless, wandering, gay young adventurer that his brother had been? Who was to tell her that? Nobody, and it made me heartsick to see her eyes follow him about, and know what she was thinking.

I'd have spoke to Sir Herbert about it, if I dared, but I didn't. He wasn't a gentleman as would have fancied liberties from his servants. It would have been as much as my place was worth.

I think the next important thing that happened was the first look we had at the Harvest Moon, which was one evening when Sir Herbert and her ladyship and the Tua Mata were sitting on the mats in the big house, and I was just outside—for Sir Herbert liked to have me near at hand.

I was so near that I overheard every word that was said, and I heard my master come out plump with a direct question about the pearl. The Tua Mata didn't answer him at first, but after a moment she said—

"It is 'ere," and put up her hand to the cheap brass locket she wore hanging by a cord from her neck.

"'E al-ways say," says the Tua Mata in her queer-sounding speech, that made me think of her ladyship's French maid we'd left behind in Auckland—"'Ayes al-ways say 'e weesh me to 'ave the 'Arves' Moon, an' so w'en 'e—w'en 'e is dead, the boys, Tano an' Sitivi, breeng it to me, an' I wear it, like 'e wear it, in the gol' locket.

"You like to see?"

She took the locket off and held it in her hands before her. It must have taken her some little time to open the thing, or else what was inside was well wrapped up, for none of them spoke at once. Then, after what may have been a minute or more, I saw their heads go forward, and I heard her ladyship give a cry, and I heard Sir Herbert draw in a very long, deep breath, so that it hissed and whistled between his teeth.

How it happened, I can't say, not even now, but somehow or other I found myself inside that house, a-crouching behind the three people, who sat leaning forward with their heads together. And I saw what they were gazing at—what the Tua Mata held in the palm of her hand over a little square of black cloth.

It wasn't like any pearl in the world, nor it wasn't like any other kind of a jewel, neither. I can't find words for it, and I expect there isn't any. It was like smouldering fire with a veil over the surface. No, it was like something ghastly and beautiful and alive, for I'll swear I saw it move. I'll swear it breathed—quite regular, up and down, like you or me—and, as it breathed, those smouldering fires burnt red, and faded, and burnt red again. It was the most wonderful thing in the world, and the horriblest. You couldn't tear your eyes away from it. You didn't know *what* it might change into or make up its beautiful wicked mind to do.

"The 'Arves' Moon!" says the Tua Mata in a whisper, and her voice broke the spell I was under, and I tiptoed away before anybody saw me. It didn't break the spell for

the others, though, and especially for Sir Herbert, who sat bending forward, with his eyes fastened on the Harvest Moon, and scarcely seemed to breathe at all. I'd never seen him like that before. But when the Tua Mata stirred at last, and began to wrap the pearl up once more in a half dozen little squares of cloth, Sir Herbert drew another long breath and rubbed one hand across his face. I thought he looked dazed, as if he'd been asleep. He didn't say anything, but her ladyship exclaimed about how magnificent the Harvest Moon was, and how she didn't wonder so many people had lost their heads, and their lives as well, over it.

And no more do I—no more do I!

Now, you may believe it or not, but, from that evening on to the end, I bear witness that my master was another man altogether. Whether he was bewitched by the Harvest Moon, I haven't no means of making sure, but I know what I think. You must think what you choose.

For one thing, he began to drink more than was good for him—as he'd done once before, some years back, but had cured himself of—and the drink made him irritable and hard to please. I had to mind my p's and q's in those days, you may be sure. Nor I wasn't the only one to suffer, neither, for her ladyship had many a word out of him that he wouldn't have spoke if he'd been quite himself.

Likewise he talked in his sleep as never before, and it was about the Harvest Moon, though that wasn't noways strange, for I dreamed of it once myself, and woke up fair trembling, the dream having been a dreadful one.

But the worst of all was what you might call a breaking up of character, which I began to see in him. Sir Herbert hadn't never been a ladies' man, and I expect that was why he was unmarried at three-and-forty. He hadn't cared about women's society, and so, when he began to spend all his hours walking or sitting about alone with the Tua Mata—and her nothing else than an innocent child—it meant more than if he had been another man. The girl, I dare say, thought she was in heaven. It was easy enough to see how *she* felt about it—too easy. But no happiness could come of it, and it made me very sad to see Sir Herbert, that had led an upright and honourable life, though at times a little hard and unbending, begin at three-and-forty to play fast and loose with a brown girl who trusted him and hadn't the weapons to fight back at him with.

It wasn't just walking about to see the sights, neither. He made out-and-out love to the Tua Mata. I saw it more than once. I don't know if her ladyship saw, too, but I hope she didn't.

* * * * *

So things went on, and got no better, but much worse, and it came to the evening of the ninth day. Sir Herbert had been the very devil to get on with that day—though I'm sure I regret using such language of my master, and him a baronet—and, when evening came, I was very glad to have her ladyship ask me to walk with her along the beach for an hour, to get a breath of cool air, the afternoon having been very hot.

So we went, and the night air was cool and fresh, and full of the most wonderful sweet smells from trees and flowers out of sight in the dark, and the sky was the deepest purple blue that could be, with stars so warm and bright they looked like pearls—but not like the Harvest Moon, which I'd dreamt of again the night before—and the sea made soft little whispers out against the reefs, and now and then a fish jumped in the lagoon, and, I remember, some of the native men and women were singing together far away at the other side of the village.

It seemed a pity not to stay out in that beautiful night till the dawn came, but at the end of an hour or thereabouts her ladyship said we must go back to the house.

They'd forgotten us—the two there in the lamplight—or else they hadn't expected us so soon. Sir Herbert was a-sitting on one of the boxes the Tua Mata had brought in for her guests, who couldn't sit comfortable on the woven mat, and the girl was kneeling at his knees, *and they were talking about when they should be married!*

Her ladyship began to tremble as we stood outside, and I was for slipping away, but she caught my arm and held me.

Lovers' talk they were talking, though I hadn't thought my master capable of such, and all about marriage.

I couldn't believe my ears.

Sir Herbert said how he must first go back to England to settle his affairs, and that made the Tua Mata weep; and she begged him to take her with him, saying as she'd die if left behind. Then he had to comfort her about that, and there was more lovers' talk.

But when they had been still for a moment, and the girl's face was hidden on his knees, my master says in a very low voice—

"Let me see the Harvest Moon, Mata!"

She reared up her head at that, looking frightened, and clasped both hands together over the brass locket that hung on her breast.

"Why—why?"

"Why not?" says Sir Herbert in that same low voice, and, after a bit, she unclasped her hands and opened the locket.

They looked at that great pearl together in the yellow lamplight, and her ladyship and I looked too, from the darkness outside; but Sir Herbert's face was purplish red, with the veins standing out on his forehead, and his hands shook a little, hanging beside him.

"Let me keep it, Mata," says he at last, in a very queer, hoarse voice—"let me keep it. I'll sell it—sell it in England, and you shall be rich—do you hear?—rich!"

But the girl gave a sharp cry and stumbled up to her feet, backing away from him across the floor. She stuffed the pearl back into the locket with the little squares of cloth, and backed away still farther, crying out—

"No, no, no! It was *'is*—'Ayes's! No—nev-vaire!"

My master had got to his feet, too, and followed a step after her, shaking all over.

"Give it to me!" says he in that queer voice. "It was Arthur's. I've a right to it. Don't be a fool! Give it to me!" And then he stopped short, for the girl was facing him with her eyes wide open and her hands spread out, and on her face the most dreadful look of horror and understanding and anguish that I have ever yet seen or, Heaven willing, ever shall see. She had to fight for breath to speak.

"So it was—that!" says she, when her voice came.

"It was—the 'Arves' Moon, not me—no! No, not me you wanted—the 'Arves' Moon!"

She gave the most terrible, loud, strangling cry, and, hard upon it, tore the brass locket from her neck, the rotten cord snapping in two, and threw it straight into Sir Herbert's face.

"Take it!" the Tua Mata says. "Take it! Take it!"—and dropped down upon the floor to her knees, and bowed herself over them with her face hidden.

We ran into the room together—her ladyship and I—and Sir Herbert turned half about to meet us. His face was as white as paper, and his eyes were staring. He looked like a man in some kind of a trance. The Harvest Moon in its cheap brass locket lay at his feet on the floor, and he stood partly stooped over it, with his hands out before him. So the three of us faced one another without a word for, I should think, half a minute. Then her ladyship screamed, very sharp and sudden, and pointed to where the brown girl lay in a heap, bowed over upon her knees. I looked, and a pool of blood was spreading out from where she lay, quite black in the lamp-light. She'd stabbed herself with the knife she wore stuck in the twist of her *pareo*.

I ran to where she was, though my legs were weak under me, and began to lift her; but Sir Herbert brushed me aside as though I had been a chair, and caught the girl up in his arms. The horror of the thing had sobered him—shocked him out of that trance or whatever it had been. He held her against his breast, calling upon her—

"Mata! Mata! For Heaven's sake, Mata! Mata!" And there was real agony and, I like to believe, real love in his voice. He held her close, and her blood streamed over them both—a dreadful sight.

The girl was almost gone, for she'd struck deep and true and near the heart with her strong little hands, but there was life in her still—a little. She opened her eyes and saw his face. Her mind must have been clouded, for she seems to have thought he was her old lover that held her against his breast. She said in a very weak whisper—

"'Ayes! 'Ayes! Kiss!" And she smiled—I saw her smile.

Sir Herbert kissed her, and her head fell, and she died.

Then he laid her down upon the floor again, and bowed himself over her, and fell to sobbing like a little child.

We buried her at sunset of the next day, high up on the mountain alongside Mr. Arthur's grave, that had called himself Hayes. It was a sad day for Tuvana and a sad day for the three of us who had come there, meaning no harm.

But it was a grand occasion for the Harvest Moon, which I think must have laughed itself almost to death and clapped its hands for joy.

I had had a dreadful night with Sir Herbert, who was quite unstrung and broke down and hysterical over the Tua Mata's death, and wept and called himself a murderer, and said he should never forgive himself, nor Heaven wouldn't, neither, and carried on in a shocking way, and couldn't sleep until very late indeed, when he dropped off into a sort of doze.

Her ladyship sat up all through the night

with the other women beside the Tua Mata's body.

But at dawn my master awoke, looking very ill, and the first thing he did was to take two very stiff drinks of whisky, with no food to go with it. I ventured to urge him not to, but he looked up at me under his eyebrows and said—

"Curse you, hold your tongue!" Which I did.

Afterwards he walked up and down for an hour, muttering to himself, then slept a little more, and then took another nip. So he went on through most of the day. Her ladyship, very white and deathly, tried once or twice to speak to him, but he cut her off as savage as an angry dog, and so she let him alone.

Once, towards noon, he went into the big house where the women were kneeling round the body of their dead princess, and drove them away, and stayed there alone for half an hour or so. When he came out, he was shivering and unsteady on his feet. But he lay down and slept for a long while.

It came to be time to carry the Tua Mata up the mountain-side to her grave, which the young men were to do, and her ladyship spoke to Sir Herbert, whom she hadn't said a word to since morning. She spoke very grave and serious and short, without any cringing—the first time I ever knew her to stand up to him without fear, as you might say. She says—

"When Mata is buried, the Harvest Moon is to be buried with her. I hope you understand that." And Sir Herbert answered—

"Yes, that's right—that's right." And she went away.

One last look I had at the poor child before they wrapped her up in the precious woven mats to carry her to her grave. There were flowers about her and in her hair, and her little hands were crossed, and her beautiful face was quite calm—not smiling nor frowning, just calm and as peaceful as peace itself.

And lying on her breast was the cheap brass locket tied by its bit of dirty string.

I must say it made my heart beat fast to see it there, and to think that at last, after so much wickedness and despair and treachery and bloodshed, the Harvest Moon was to be lost to the world—buried away for ever where it couldn't bewitch and ruin and kill people any more. It was the only thing to do—I knew that right enough. It was like burying a horrid disease where it could never harm the world again, but, for all that, it made my heart beat fast. It was like seeing a great fortune thrown deliberate-like into the sea or burnt.

I don't quite know whether I was sorry or not, but I was very much excited. I confess that.

* * * * *

So we buried her beside her lover, looking out over the quiet sea, and the young men who had been up there on the mountain-side all day, making ready, piled the big stones over her in a flat, low heap like over Hayes's grave, and the women scattered flowers and wept and sang.

The sun went down behind the western sea, and we came away.

* * * * *

That same evening Sir Herbert and her ladyship and I went on board the schooner. I won't say that we thought it was downright unsafe to stay at Tuvana, for the natives were civil to us up to the last minute—not having any clear idea of how we were responsible for Mata's death—but there was sure to be a good deal of palm-wine drinking that night, and so on, and we felt that it was just as well to get away—Sir Herbert in particular. So we went on board, and there was just a breath of air blowing to carry us outside the reef into the three-knot current that flows past, then the breeze dropped altogether and we drifted on the current. In an hour the few low lights along the island beach were out of sight, and we were done with Tuvana—almost.

Sir Herbert had been drinking through the day, and wasn't himself. That must have been why he invited the skipper and the mate to sit down with him in the bit of a saloon and crack a bottle (we were out of the lagoon then and drifting, so there was no work for them on deck). Her ladyship was for going off to her cabin at that, but Sir Herbert took offence, and, to humour him, she stayed while the skipper and the mate, very red and uncomfortable, pretended to drink what Sir Herbert poured out to them.

I wasn't there—I was on deck—but I could see and hear all that went on through the saloon skylight, that was open to let in the air. Besides me, there was only the Kanaka at the wheel, the others of the crew being below having their supper.

I remember that there were two huge sharks a-circling round the schooner—I could see them in the starlight—and as I was watching these, I didn't pay attention

to all that went on in the saloon below. But presently the skipper, for some reason, began talking about the Harvest Moon, and about what a wicked thing it was, but, all the same, it seemed dreadful to a poor man like him to bury anything so valuable away from the world. Thousands and thousands of pounds it must be worth, he says, and he says he was sure he couldn't have done it—meaning put away the pearl under the ground.

At that, Sir Herbert began to laugh—a queer, nasty, tittering sort of low laugh—and kept on laughing as if he couldn't stop. But finally he says—

"Neither could I, friend Schwartz—neither could I." *And he reached into his jacket pocket and pulled out the Harvest Moon, and laid it on the table before him!*

My heart came up into my mouth, and I nearly tumbled into the open skylight, where I was crouching to see.

Well, it's no good wondering and explaining and making excuses now, though I like to believe he couldn't have done it if he had been himself. I like to think he was bewitched, and I know he was drunk, or near it. But, when all's said and done, the man who would rob a dead girl, who had come to her death through his own doing, is a scoundrel and a blackguard and a dirty dog, and those words I stick to, though the man was my master and a baronet.

And though she found other words, such as a lady might use, it was just about those same things that her ladyship said to her brother after she had given one loud, dreadful scream at the sight of the Harvest Moon, and got to her feet, trembling all over, and stood facing him with her back against the saloon bulkhead. And she said he was never more any brother of hers, and she wished she might die without seeing his face again. Then she went away to shut herself into her own cabin. But Sir Herbert sat where he was, breathing a bit hard and very purple in the face. And presently the other two—the skipper and the mate—who had got up when her ladyship began to carry on, sat down again, and all three of them stared at that wonderful wicked pearl as if they couldn't leave off. From where I was on the deck overhead, I could see the mate's face plainest, and it was twitching and his eyes were standing out. It frightened me, the mate's face did. It was terrible. Once he put out his big red hand towards the pearl, as if to turn it over, but Sir Herbert says very sharp—

"Don't touch it!"

And he drew his hand back. He says in a kind of whisper—

"Thousands and thousands of pounds!" And after a time he says it again, and his face was dreadful.

The old skipper went away presently, shaking his head, but the other two—Sir Herbert and the mate—they stayed on, quite still, with the pearl between them, and after a bit I couldn't bear it any longer. The sight of the Harvest Moon began to get on my nerves and to play tricks with my eyes. I went away and watched the two sharks circling about again, and while I watched them, I thought of that poor murdered—yes, murdered—and tricked and robbed brown girl in her grave on the mountain-side, and I was fair shivering with black rage at my master, and I didn't see how I could possibly go on a-serving him.

He came up on deck presently, with the mate close after, and began to walk up and down, none too steady on his feet; but I couldn't bear to be near him, and went below. I remembered afterwards that I'd left just the three there on the schooner's deck—Sir Herbert, the mate, and the Kanaka boy at the wheel.

I think I must have dozed off in my cabin, so I don't know how long afterwards it was that I heard feet running about overhead, and the mate's voice bellowing—

"Man overboard! Man overboard!"

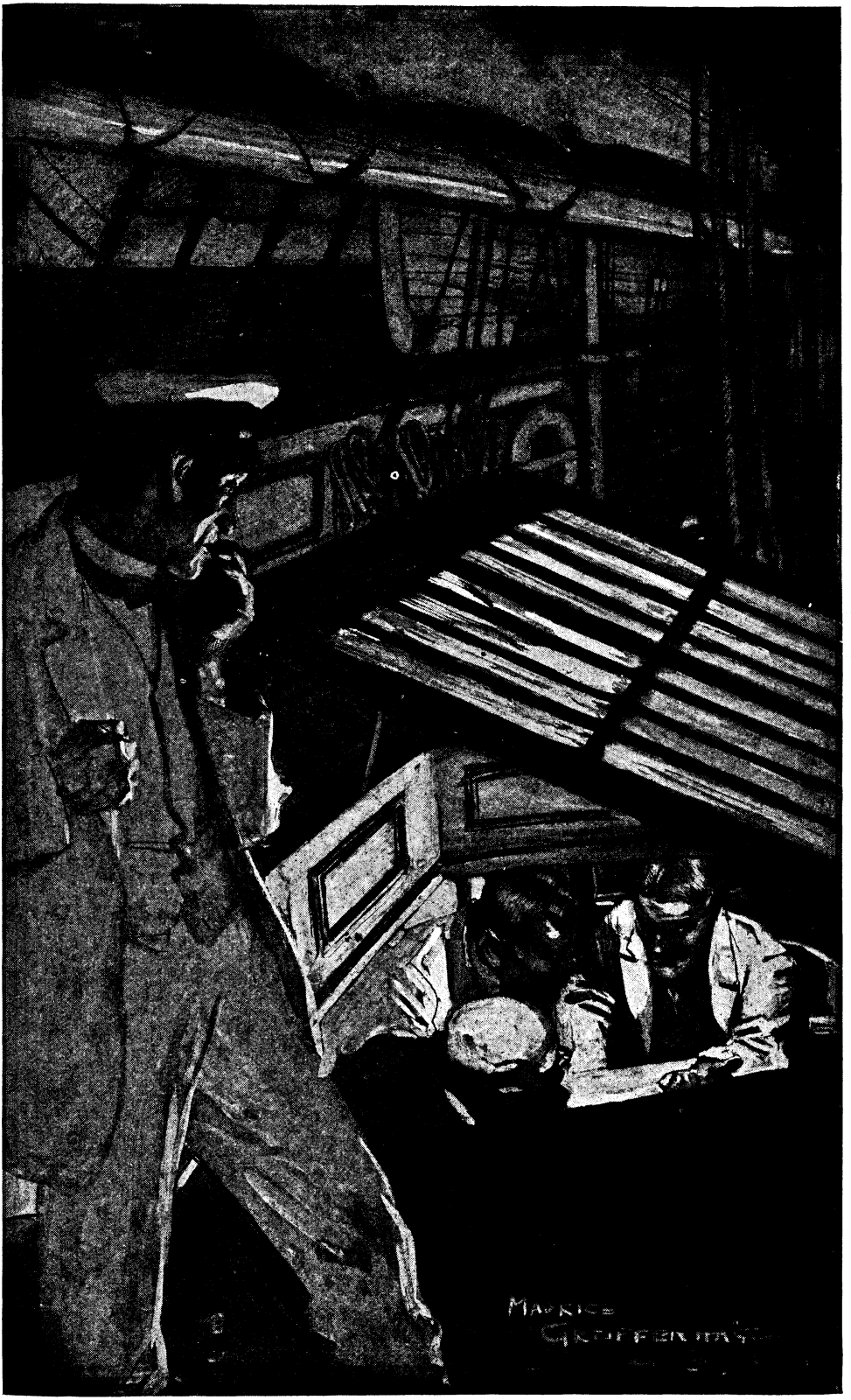
I hadn't undressed, and I ran up at once. The skipper and the mate were there, talking very excited, and the crew was beginning to tumble out of the fo'castle companion.

Sir Herbert was gone! Gone—quite gone! Him that I had served for seven years—him that I had seen, half an hour back, sitting alive and staring at the Harvest Moon. Gone out of the world for ever!

Like a smashed fly.

"'E must 'ave missed 'is footing," the mate was saying. "'E must 'ave missed 'is footing, being unsteady-like with the drink, and pitched straight over the side. I'd sent the boy below to get 'is supper, and I was at the wheel meself. The first thing I knew I hears a splash, and then a little shout like, off to loo'ard, and then a great whopping splash where the shout come from, and nothing more. That'll 'ave been one o' them sharks, sir, 'as got 'im."

So, very swift and awful and unlooked-for, Sir Herbert came to his end. Perhaps he deserved it. Yes, I dare say he did, but it was an unusual, terrible end to come to, and I was sorry for the words I'd said about



"Pulled out the Harvest Moon, and laid it on the table before him!"

him, even though they were to myself, with no one to hear.

I don't think the skipper believed a word of the mate's story, except, perhaps, about the sharks at the end, and I know I didn't. For, even in the dim glow from the binnacle lamp, I'd caught sight of red on the mate's right hand, which he tried to hold behind him, and, as soon as might be, scrubbed off; but there was no witness, and no way of proving anything, and the skipper was an old man that stood in terror of his own mate. So nothing was done.

The worst of all was telling her ladyship, which I had to do. She took it like a man, and I think it didn't come so hard on her as it would have done a fortnight before. If he had lived, her ladyship would never have forgiven him nor lived in his house again, I'll swear.

And that night I dreamed about the Harvest Moon. The mate was holding it between his hands and staring at it—a great, fiery, glowing, shining thing as big as his head, and it threw up a red light against his face, as if it had been a lantern he was holding.

Twice I dreamt that dream, and woke up after it trembling. And the next night I dreamt it again. But not the night after, for during the third night a dreadful thing occurred. The mate disappeared like Sir Herbert had done—vanished—and in the morning there was blood on the deck near the taffrail. So he hadn't gone willing nor of his own accord.

The skipper examined all the crew one by one, singly, in his cabin, but couldn't find out anything. And he searched them, too, and the fo'castle and even the hold, but he didn't find the thing which he knew somebody must have killed the mate for.

Then, on the next day, we reached Suva, in the Fijis, which, at Sir Herbert's death, her ladyship had told the skipper to make for, and there we left the schooner and paid it off.

By great good luck there was a steamer from the north—a liner—calling at Suva on its way to Australia, the next day after we landed, and her ladyship went on board, very glad and thankful. Of course, she expected me to sail with her, but I didn't. I said my nerve was gone, and that I wanted to lie up in the sun and rest and take a holiday, and, besides, she didn't truly need me. Her ladyship was sorry, but didn't urge me long. She wanted to give me a present of money, but I wouldn't take that, saying that I had quite enough laid by from my wages to get me back to England after a bit, which was true.

So she sailed away, and I was glad to see her go, though she was one of the best and kindest and pleasantest ladies I have ever met with, and always thoughtful of her servants. I'm sure I wish her happiness and no more trouble, and if things had been different in some ways, I shouldn't have dreamed of leaving her until she was safe in England once more.

Then, when her ladyship's vessel was out of the harbour and far away, I came up here to my room in Mother McDonald's Hotel. and I locked the door and let down the window shutters, and I took the Harvest Moon out of the little bag the mate had kept it in and laid it on the table before me. The red fires within it burnt up and died out, and burnt crimson again, and it seemed to me as if the Harvest Moon began to swell and grow bigger, until it was as big as my hand, as big as my head, as big as that little room, as big as the world—a great, gigantic, shining, breathing thing, that filled up all the space there is, and left me shivering on my knees before it.

It is always like that. It has got into my head and my blood and all of me. It has bewitched me as it did the others. I see it in the air before me by day, and by night I dream of it. There's just me and the Harvest Moon in all the world now.

For all that, when I get back to London, I mean to sell the pearl. I know a man who knows a place where it can be done. Then I shall be as rich as a lord, and never work any more, and so will be my children and grand-children, who will read this tale of how I came by my fortune.

That is, if I ever get back to England at all. Twice to-day it seemed to me as if I was being followed as I walked down the beach road, and yesterday a seafaring man, whom I was drinking with in one of the bars near the harbour, asked some very odd questions.

I wonder if they know anything?

AN UNORTHODOX ENGAGEMENT.

By A. HAMILTON GIBBS.

CHARLIE CATOR walked quickly along Oxford Street. He was amused, but not a little annoyed. That very morning his mother had taken him aside and tearfully unburdened herself. She had, it appeared, been very greatly troubled at the number of marriages between peers and chorus girls, and, in order that her son should not commit a like folly, she had implored and commanded him to fall in love with some nice girl and be safely married as quickly as possible.

Charlie laughed at his mother's fears, and assured her that he was quite safe; but his laughter had only increased her anxiety, and at last, to put an end to a somewhat painful though equally humorous scene, Charlie had promised to look round and let her know.

A motor-bus crashed along, spurting mud with complete unconcern. Cator waited, carefully out of range, until the evil thing was past. He then crossed over and turned in the direction of Regent Street. He had only been down from Oxford about three years, but he had not grown out of the habit of wearing his Bullingdon tie at least two days a week, and it was too absurd, he thought, to have to think about getting engaged and settling down just as he was beginning to taste the joys of life. But he came to the conclusion that his mother was far too precious to be worried on his account, and he determined to humour her as best he could.

So Cator, dodging the world and his wife with the unconscious dexterity of the born Londoner, continued on his way. Sandwich-men, smoking inch-long cutty pipes, carried advertisements of beauty specialists, Suffragettes, and musical comedies, sublimely unconcerned with the rush of taxis, buses, and carts, which spattered them with greasy mud from head to foot. The sun had condescended to shine again, and the people, like the trees, came out in gay colours. Cator suddenly smiled. Outside a famous shop he saw a large car, which he recognised as belonging to the Woodroughs. He hurried towards it, seized with a brilliant idea. Looking in, he caught the eye of the only occupant, and raised his hat.

Mary Woodrough smiled. "Good morning!" she said. "Isn't this disgusting weather? Come in and talk to me while mother does her shopping."

"Rather!" said Cator. He opened the door and sat down beside her. "This is awfully lucky, as I've got a proposal to make to you."

Mary beamed. "That's ripping of you," she said, "but I had hoped that my first proposal would be at a dance, with soft music and a new moon."

Cator laughed. "Well, it isn't *exactly* that," he said, "but something like it."

"Oh!" said Mary, a little disappointed. "Well, tell me what it is."

Cator was silent for a moment. The chauffeur took out a green handkerchief, polished the left-hand lamp glass, and then blew his nose loudly.

"Well, this is the idea," said Cator. "I want to be engaged to you without any idea of our being married."

"Great Cæsar's ghost!" gasped Mary.

"You see," said Cator, "I shall come into the title one day, though I hope not for ages yet, but, anyhow, I've got to think about getting married. I've had no experience in that sort of thing yet, and, before I become engaged to the right woman, I want to find out just what one does and how one does it."

"But why do you come to me, of all people?" asked Mary in amazement.

"Well," said Cator, "because you're perfectly charming, dress well, put your hats on at the right angle, say and do the right thing at the right moment, and because, also, I think it will be useful to you."

Mary laughed and made a sarcastic bow. "Not at all," she said. "How will it be useful to me?"

"You don't get many opportunities of going about," said Cator, "so your chances of meeting some good chap and getting married are practically nil."

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"Too true!" sighed Mary.

"Well, I know heaps of decent men, and can introduce you when we go about together, and it's a hundred to one that you'll like one of them sufficiently to accept him. They are all good chaps, and are bound to fall in love with you. That's where *you* come in. You can correct my daily love-letters, which, of course, you need not answer——"

"Thank Heaven!" put in Mary.

"And generally put me on to the various ropes, which is where *I* come in," finished Cator.

"It's a glorious idea," said Mary.

"Good work!" said Cator. "Then are we engaged—without any idea of marriage?" he added quickly.

"Rather!" agreed Mary.

"Splendid!" said Cator. "May I light a cigarette?"

"Of course." Mary was delighted. It was much better than a real proposal, which she thought, when the first excitement had worn off, must be very dull.

Cator lit a cigarette. "Now, as regards money," he said. "I'm afraid I shan't always be able to run to the Carlton, but what do you think of places like Giovanni's?"

"Topping!" said Mary.

"Right!" said Cator. "To return to the subject of love-letters for a moment. You know there is no University course on the art of writing love-letters, so if you will go through and correct my daily efforts—they have to be daily, don't they?"—Mary nodded—"I can mug them up, and it'll be most useful to me. You don't mind?"

Mary laughed. "Oh, no—any little thing like that!"

"Thanks very much," said Cator. "Now, what about the question of kissing?"

"Well," said Mary, after a moment's pause, "of course you'll have to kiss me and let me kiss you. All engaged people do, you know."

"All right," said Cator. "When does one do it?"

"Well," said Mary thoughtfully, "Sundays are always very boring, and if I could look forward to a kiss at the end of them, it would help to pull me through. What do you think?"

"Splendid! On Sunday evenings, then."

"And perhaps," Mary continued, "when you've seen me home after a show, and have to drive back all alone, you might like one then?"

"Oh, rather!" said Cator. "By Jove, you think of everything!"

Mary laughed. "I want to do my share," she said.

Cator nodded. "Finally," he said, "and not the least important, is the question of ending the business. As soon as you meet the right man, or I meet the right girl——"

Mary broke in. "We tip each other the immediate wink, eh?"

Cator laughed. "Bull's-eye!" he said. "I think that's the simplest way, don't you?"

"Yes," said Mary.

The chauffeur again pulled out the green handkerchief and trumpeted loudly. Cator looked up. The man caught his eye and jerked his thumb, with a significant raising of the eyebrows, towards the shop. Cator threw his cigarette out of window. "I take it your mother's coming," he said. "Oughtn't we to celebrate our engagement by kissing now?"

"Bright notion!" said Mary, holding up her lips.

Cator kissed them. "By Jove," he said, after a pause, "that was—great!"

"Shall I let mother know to-day?" asked Mary quickly, with a faint thumping of the heart.

"Yes," said Cator. "The thing is well started. Good morning, Mrs. Woodrough!" he added, as she appeared at the door. "Permit me." He sprang out and handed her in.

Mary held out her hand. Good-bye—Charlie! I'll tell mother as we go."

"Thanks very much—Mary. I'll ring you up later about dining somewhere to-night." Cator shook hands and raised his hat. The motor leapt forward.

II.

CATOR was standing in front of the wardrobe one morning, some two months later, absorbed in the choosing of a tie suitable to the near approach of summer. The problem was not an easy one, and he rejected tie after tie before he at last found one to satisfy him. A tap came at the door just as he was about to put it round his neck. Cator was thinking of Mary, and it was almost mechanically that he called out "Come in!" The arrangement had succeeded most miraculously. His mother, now that he was safely tied, as she thought, to a perfectly delightful girl of whom she thoroughly approved, was blissfully happy. All her fears were at rest, and Charlie was able to congratulate himself on his great idea, not merely because of having pleased his mother, but also because he found the experience most delightful. Mary and he had been everywhere and done everything

together—theatres, race-meetings, dinners, and dances. He had, according to the bargain, introduced her to all his men friends, and Mary, thoroughly enjoying herself, had carefully trained him in the things an engaged man ought to know. Charlie had not yet met the ideal girl, nor apparently had Mary shown any sign of being in love with anyone, and his careful choice in the matter of a tie was due to the fact that he was going racing with her that morning.



"'Permit me.' He sprang out and handed her in."

In answer to his "Come in!" the man entered with a telegram. "Any answer, sir?" he asked.

Cator finished his tie, opened the telegram, and read it. He remained silent until the man, thinking himself forgotten, asked again if there were any answer. Cator started. "No," he said quietly. The man left the room, and Charlie read the wire again: "Have met the right man.—Mary."

So this was the end, eh? Mary had found

someone to her liking, after all. Cator forgot all about dressing, and sat, thoughtful, on the side of his bed. There would be no more delightful dinners and dances, no more Sunday evenings, which he had come to find so pleasant. The thing was finished. He was by himself again, while Mary was going to become really engaged. How strange it would be! He got up and lit a cigarette. No, it wouldn't be strange—it would be frightful! Hang it! Mary was a ripper, absolutely top noteh, and some blighter had stolen her heart. "It's impossible!" thought Cator. "I *can't* let her go! *She's* the ideal girl, and I, blind fool, didn't see it! Where's my hat?"

He rushed about the room, sprang into his coat, seized his hat, and was downstairs in five leaps and into the street. A taxi whirled him away, and in less than five minutes he was holding on to the electric bell outside Mary's house. He was shown into a room which he did not know, and paced violently up and down, waiting for her.

"Good morning, Charlie!" Mary had opened the door quietly and stood nervously inside the room.

Cator strode over to her. "Who is he?" he asked fiercely.

Mary crossed the room before answering, and stood at the window. "I met him some time ago," she said evasively.

"Well, tell me who he is," demanded Cator, following her, "and I'll go and tell him to drown himself, and see that he does it, too!"

A smile flickered for an instant round Mary's eyes—a smile of triumph. "I don't want him drowned, thank you," said Mary. "He's far too nice, and I—I like him too well, so I shan't tell you."

"Where did you meet him?" Cator was trying hard to keep cool by doing his best to smash the back of a chair with his hands.

"I met him—— But I don't see why I should answer all these questions." Mary turned and faced Cator. "Our bargain was that, as soon as either of us met the right person, we should let each other know, and as I've met him"—Mary's eyes dropped from Cator's—"I had to tell you."

Cator turned away and swallowed. There was silence for a minute. Mary blew a kiss at his back. Cator's voice, when he faced Mary again, was quiet. "I'm most awfully sorry I—I threatened to drown him. Please forgive me! You've been awfully kind in keeping our bargain, and I—I—— Good-bye!" He held out his hand.

"Can't you guess who he is?" asked Mary softly.

"No, I was never good at—at guessing," said Cator. "As I shan't see you again, may I—will you—can't we end our arrangement as we began it that day in the motor?"

"Would it be fair to—to him?" asked Mary.

Cator picked up his hat and stick. "You're right," he said; "it would be caddish. Good-bye!"

They shook hands in silence.

Mary watched him cross to the door. He hadn't guessed, and was really going. Oh! "Charlie!" she called softly.

Cator shut the door again and returned. "Yes?" he said.

"Don't you really know who it is?" Mary clasped her hands nervously, almost angrily, and turned her back on him.

"No," said Cator, "but I hope you'll be awfully happy."

Mary still kept her face away. "I met him in Regent Street," she said, "just about two months ago."

Cator stared at her for a moment, unable to believe his ears. Then he dropped his hat and stick and swung her round. "Mary," he cried, "you're not rotting? Do you mean—me?"

"Yes," said Mary bravely.

Cator seized her in his arms, and the real engagement began as the other one had done that day in the motor.

AUSTIN'S VIENNESE AUNT.

By KEBLE HOWARD,

Author of "The Smiths of Surbiton," "The Whip Hand," etc.

"WE particularly want you to dine with us on Thursday week at eight," wrote Celia. "Austin's aunt from Vienna will be staying with us, and she has so often expressed a keen desire to meet you. Do come, there's a dear old thing!"

I saw through this note at once. The first sentence was a joint affair. "She has so often expressed a keen desire to meet you" was pure, unadulterated Austin, whilst the little wheedling bit at the end was equally pure, unadulterated Celia. Shameless perjury simply leapt from the paper. The writing was firm enough—Celia never falters when she has a pen in her hand—but the spaces between the lines were black with falsehood and deception.

Well, three could play at that game. Sitting down at my desk, I selected a card and replied as follows: "I am so dreadfully disappointed that I cannot accept your most kind invitation to meet Austin's aunt from Vienna, of whom I have so often heard you both speak in tones of the greatest affection and respect. The fact is, however, that I have had to make it a rule never to dine out on Thursdays, this being the only night in the week when——"

When what? I was stuck. The note was perfect up to that. Especially cutting was the reference to the "tones of the greatest affection and respect" in which they spoke of the Viennese aunt. Heavens, what awful things I had heard them say of the old lady's stinginess! She was fearfully rich, she was always telling them that they were down for a nice round sum in her will, but not a penny would she part with during her lifetime. Why in the world, I wondered, had they asked her to stay with them? Were they going to drop something into her soup? Yes, that was it, and the blame was to fall on me! I returned with renewed determination to my note.

When what? Why should I always dine at home on Thursdays? I was still battling with the problem when the telephone-bell, starting suddenly, nearly knocked me out of my chair.

"Hullo!" I growled.

"Is that you? How are you?" (Celia! If only I had had the presence of mind to ring off at once! But she had heard my voice and knew I was in. I'm a perfect fool at the telephone.)

"I'm very well, thanks. How are you?"

"Awfully fit. Did you get——"

"And Austin?"

"Yes, he's splendid, thanks. Did you get——"

"And the baby?"

"Baby's grand, thanks. Getting simply enormous! By the way, did you receive——"

"Quite got over that nasty little cold, I hope?"

"What do you mean? She hasn't had a cold!"

"I meant you, you know."

"I haven't had a cold, either. I say, did you get——"

"I've had a slight cold."

"Have you? I'm so sorry. You sound all right. I wrote you last——"

"The telephone's so deceptive. It's a pretty bad cold, as a matter of fact."

"Poor old thing! I'll 'phone Austin to pop in and see you on his way home."

"No, don't do that; I shall be out all the evening."

"It can't be so very bad, then!" (Stumped!) "Did you get my note this morning?"

"Er—let me see. Yes, I think I did."

"Think you did? You must know whether you had it or not. Haven't you opened your letters yet?"

(Good idea!) "Er—no, not yet."

"Open mine at once, then! I'll hold the wire."

Stumped again! I put down the receiver for a little while, but it was too bad to keep

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her waiting for more than a minute. A minute is a long time on the 'phone.

"Oh, yes," I cried at last, "I've got it!"

"Well, will you come?"

"I'm so sorry, but I'm afraid it's quite impossible."

"Have you another engagement?"

"Not exactly that, but—er——"

"Well? Don't invent!"

"No, no! Why should I? The fact is that I make it a rule never to dine out on Thursdays."

"Why?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"I said, why don't you dine out on Thursdays? I never heard of that rule before."

"No, I expect not; it's a new one."

"Invented for the occasion?"

"My dear Celia, why should I——"

"Oh, I know you're rather cross with us about that stupid butler business, but this is quite a different matter. You'll be doing us the greatest kindness if you will only come on Thursday. It's most important that you should meet Austin's aunt, and you know how necessary it is that we should do everything we can to please the old lady. I ask you, for the sake of our past friendship, to strain a point and accept that little invitation. Will you? Don't say 'No'! I shall be fearfully upset if you do—I shall probably cry all day long."

"But—but what about my rule?"

"Are you serious about that?"

"Quite." I felt that I had to stick to it.

"Well, then, we'll make it Wednesday. You've no rule for Wednesday, have you? All right, then. At eight sharp. Good-bye, and thanks so much!"

"Only too delighted!" I moaned.

II.

I HAVE never seen anything quite so perfect, in its way, as the behaviour of Austin and Celia towards Fraulein Josephine Göhring. At dinner, for example, Austin interrupted one of my best stories to fetch a footstool for the old lady's feet, whilst Celia insisted on placing a shawl with her own hands about Auntie Josephine's shoulders. Many witty remarks that fell from my lips passed quite unnoticed, but Auntie Josephine, who fancies herself as a wag, had but to open her lips in speech to elicit a roar of laughter from one end of the table and a shriek from the other.

I was afraid that my young friends were overdoing it—that Fraulein Göhring would see through their sycophantic tactics. But no! The more they studied her, the more she beamed upon them over her spectacles; the more they flattered her, the more she swayed and rolled in her chair with delight. It was really rather hard on the other relations. At this rate, Austin and Celia would pretty soon stand to inherit the whole of the old lady's fortune.

One thing alone puzzled me—why had they insisted on my meeting Auntie Josephine? The answer to the riddle was forthcoming very soon after dinner. Having separated me, with some little difficulty, from my half-smoked cigar, Austin conducted me into the drawing-room. Auntie Josephine was seated in state upon a couch in front of the fire; Celia, nestling prettily at the old lady's knee, was reading choice extracts from the evening paper.

For a few minutes general conversation took the place of the reading; then Austin slipped out of the room. Celia, Auntie Josephine, and I entertained each other in a desultory, uncertain sort of way for another quarter of an hour. At the end of that time, Austin reappeared and begged Fraulein Göhring to excuse his wife for a little while—they had an urgent matter of business to settle before the post went out. Thus I was left quite alone with Auntie Josephine.

The old lady, smiling expansively, patted a small portion of the couch for which she had no use at the moment.

"Come and sit here," she said. "I wish to talk to you, and my hearing is not of the best."

I had to go. I felt six years of age all over, but there was no help for it. Praying that Celia would soon return to rescue me, I perched myself on the little piece of spare couch.

"Tell me," she began—"you are an intimate friend of my nephew and niece, are you not?"

I replied that I thought I might almost venture to describe myself in such terms.

"I am sure you may," said the old lady. "They speak of you most kindly. They say, indeed, that you are quite one of the family. That is so, is it not?"

"Well, if they are good enough to call me that, I could scarcely be so churlish as to deny it."

"Very prettily spoken." She actually had the audacity to pat my hand. At the same time I could see that she was not entirely satisfied with my answers and general demeanour. Whatever my own feelings I

told myself, I must be very careful to do nothing that would injure the prospects of my young friends.

"I understand that you knew them quite well before they were married?"

"Oh, yes! I have known them both quite well for some years."

"You—how does one say it?—supported Austin at his wedding, did you not?"

"I did."

"And you are to be the sponsor—what do you call it?—the godfather to their little girl?"

"Am I, though?"

"You did not know that?"

"I'm afraid I didn't."

"Then I have told you a secret. Keep it to yourself, if you please." Here she patted my hand again, smiling a great deal as though this new token of esteem should make me the happiest man in the world. "And now I will tell you another secret, since I am sure you are the one who can best give me advice. This time it is my own secret. Listen! I have some money—more money than I shall ever need for my own personal wants. I have taken a great fancy to these two dear children, and I have been asking myself why I should wait until my death before bestowing upon them some of my money. I should not wish, however, since they are so young, to hand over to them the actual—what is that you say for *geld?*—cash. I should prefer, rather, to invest it for them in some good English security, with a rate of interest not too low. I have the honour to seek your valuable advice, therefore, on this point, since you are older than these young people, and their greatest friend."

"Greatly as I appreciate your confidence, Fraulein Göhring"—it is amazing how quickly one adapts oneself to this stately style of conversation—"I scarcely like to take upon myself so great a responsibility. I am not much of a business man, you know, and I think it would be better if you consulted a lawyer, a banker, or a stockbroker."

"That," returned the old lady, "is precisely what I do not wish. I have found it to be the case, almost invariably, that to act upon the advice of mere professional men in these matters is to court disaster. I think you are too modest, also, with regard to your business abilities; my nephew speaks very highly of them. Thirdly, I am not seeking a wild or hazardous investment. One of your good British industrial securities would answer the purpose very well."

"I thought you spoke of a rate of interest not too low."

"It is true that I am not fond of too low a percentage on my money."

"I don't think any of us are very fond of it. We play for safety—that is to say, we accept the inevitable."

"The inevitable being——"

"About four per cent."

"Four per cent. is not too good." Her spectacles were never removed for an instant from my face. "May I ask whether you are always contented yourself, sir, with four per cent.?"

"Not always, perhaps. One sometimes has an opportunity of hearing of things from one's friends, but there is bound to be a certain amount of risk attaching to them if the percentage is high."

"I wonder whether you would tell me, as a favour, of one such good thing with which you have come into contact through a friend, and which you have found no reason to regret? You will pardon my persistence, I am sure, but I am an old lady, I am a visitor to your country, and I am anxious to do the best I can for my nephew and his dear wife. Believe me, I shall be most grateful for any assistance that you can render me."

I began to understand why Fraulein Josephine Göhring was so rich.

"But supposing," I said, "that you invest your money in this concern, and the value of the stock declines, or the dividend falls—what then?"

"Have you any reason to anticipate such a catastrophe?"

"None at all, but the thing might happen. It would place me in a very awkward position. I'm sure you will see that."

"Let me promise you, sir, that, should so unfortunate a matter occur, you would not hear from my lips one word of reproach."

"You might think it, all the same."

"What I think," she replied, unconsciously getting very near to a quotation, "I speak. I should know that you had acted with the highest intentions. In the meantime, would it not be as well to see your friend with the knowledge? He could doubtless give you the latest information to be obtained."

"I will do that, if you wish it. At the same time——"

"I thank you very heartily. I forget, by the way, whether you mentioned the name of the security that you had in mind?"

"No, I did not mention it."

"But you will, of course, do so now—in the strictest confidence?"

There was no way out. "Lightning Motor Cabs," I blurted.

"I thank you. I shall remember that—Lightning Motor Cabs. And the rate of interest?"

"They've always paid eight."

"That is good. I shall expect to hear from you when you have seen your friend. In the meantime——"

Smiling, she pressed her finger to her lips.

III.

I SAW my "friend with the knowledge" the very next morning. He assured me that Lightning Motor Cabs were as safe as the Bank of England—indeed, he had just taken up another five hundred shares on behalf of his wife.

This seemed good enough. I hurried back to Austin's Viennese aunt and gave her the straight tip. I thought she would never leave off beaming.

"And now," I said, "how much do you wish to invest?"

"Two thousand pounds," was the reply.

"All in one basket?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"All in the same security?"

"Why not, my friend? If your cabs are really good, why should I not have two thousand of them? If they are not good, why should I have any of them?"

"Well, it's generally considered safer to split up your money."

"Not I! I do not split my money when I find so nice a thing. I rely implicitly upon you and upon your friend with the knowledge. Please buy those shares for me without delay. I shall give you now my cheque."

I did as I was told. Settling day came and went; Lightning Motor Cabs were quite a good market. They even advanced a little. Obviously, Aunt Josephine's confidence had communicated itself to the public. As for Aunt Josephine, she sent me a charming note and a pair of warm bedroom slippers, three sizes too large. In my letter of thanks I begged the old lady to believe that I should always treasure them.

On the very top of this amiable correspondence came the disaster. Being in town one morning, I saw on a placard "MOTOR CAB STRIKE." I dashed at the boy and snatched a paper from his hand. Of course! The drivers of three big companies had gone out on strike, and one of the companies was the Lightning Motor Cab.

I stayed in town all that day, watching the tape. Nothing, surely, ever dropped so quickly as Lightning Motor Cabs. They seemed to fall an eighth with every tick of the beastly machine. Three times I rang up my "friend with the knowledge." The first time he was cheery and optimistic; the second time he was rather curt; the third time he was downright offensive. I told him precisely what I thought of him, and went on telling the receiver long after he had rung off.

What on earth should I do? I pictured Austin, Celia, and Fraulein Josephine Göhring waiting for me at my rooms. Austin would be striding to and fro, his brow beetled, his arms folded. Aunt Josephine would be having hysterics on the sofa, and Celia, as well as she could manage it by reason of her own floods of tears, would be pressing a smelling-bottle to Fraulein Göhring's nose.

The final quotations showed a sheer drop of three points in Lightning Motor Cabs. I decided to dine at the club, go home by the last train, and leave for town again by the workmen's train in the morning.

My rooms were empty, thank Heaven, but quite a little pile of telegrams lay on the table. I took them in order of time. The first one said: "*Please come over at once.*" The second one said: "*Come at once. Most urgent.*" The third said: "*Cannot understand why you do not come. Matter of utmost importance. Have you no heart? Reply paid.*"

I read no more. It was quite clear that I must face the storm in the morning. I had not the spirit even to curse myself for yielding so easily to Aunt Josephine's blandishments.

The maid who opened the door looked very grave. I was shown into the empty drawing-room. There was no fire. This was going to extremes, for the morning was chilly.

They kept me waiting in that vault for quite ten minutes. A sharp walk from the station had put me in a glow, but all this evaporated long before the funereal maid returned to bid me follow her upstairs.

Aunt Josephine was in bed, propped up with pillows. At her right, chafing the right hand, was Austin; at her left, chafing the other hand, was Celia. A small table near by was covered with tonics, glasses, and spoons.

"Dear, dear!" I exclaimed. "I'm sorry to find——"

"Hush!" Austin raised his hand for

silence. "My dear aunt," he whispered, "insisted on seeing you. That was why we sent the telegrams. Had you taken the trouble to answer, this collapse might have been avoided."

"I was out all day."

that you have done, sir? Is this your splendid security, these miserable cabs? Why do you not come yesterday, when we have telegraphed you at so great expense all day long? Could you not guess what my feelings should be? 'Ow do



"Aunt Josephine was in bed, propped up with pillows."

"Hush! He is here at last, auntie dear. Is there any question that you wish to put to him?"

"Yes!" The old lady, astonishingly vigorous all of a sudden, sat up in bed and shook her fist at me. "What is it

I know whether it is better to sell or not to sell? Is money of so small value that you can ignore so terrible a catastrophe? You haf looked after yourself, I suppose, but 'ow about me and these poor children?"

She had told them, then! All right. In for a penny, in for two thousand pounds.

"Allow me to correct you on one point," I retorted, with no little hauteur. "I have not looked after myself."

"Then the more foolish fellow you!" cried Aunt Josephine.

"That is to say, I have not sold my shares. I was in town all day yesterday, watching the tape."

"I do not know what it is, this tape. Why do you watch tape instead of attending to your business? But you English are all alike—take care of the sport, and the money will take care of itself!"

I shrugged my shoulders. Who could explain the intricacies of the tape machine to that infuriated old Austrian? Besides, what had I done that I should be attacked in this way?

"The real point is this," Austin cut in with icy calmness. "Why did you advise our dear aunt to invest her money in anything so foolish?"

"I didn't advise her."

"Oh! Then she knew all about Thunderous Motor Cabs before she met you?"

"I didn't say that. She dragged them out of me."

"*Ach!*" cried Auntie Josephine, beating the eiderdown with her plump fists.

"You did, Fraulein Göhring—you know you did! I begged you to consult a lawyer, or a stockbroker, or a banker on this subject, and you would have none of them. Then I——"

"Yes," the old lady burst in, "what then? You went to your friend with the knowledge, and you come back here, very roused, and tell me these cabs is good! Goot—*hein?* Nobody will drive der 'orrid things, and I lose all my lofely money! It was too bad!"

"Too bad!" echoed Austin and Celia, wagging their heads. This exasperated me.

"You're all talking rubbish! My friend did not know that the men were going out on strike—neither did I. Besides, they may go back at any moment. The cabs are good, the company is good. I shall not sell a single share. If Fraulein Göhring likes to sell, however, I will make up her loss out of my own pocket."

"Mein papa," said the old lady grandly, "was of one of the first families. I, therefore, too. I do not sell. Good morning, sir."

IV.

THE strike lasted the usual week, and the men then went back to work on pretty well the same terms as before. The shares promptly shot up. When they had regained the point at which Aunt Josephine "got in," I was tempted to send a slightly sarcastic wire, but refrained. This self-repression was not exactly high-souled; I wanted them to go higher.

And they did. They went nearly three points higher. The old lady could sell out now at a profit, if she chose, and invest in something else. It was time to call.

I caught them sitting round the fire with an evening paper. The funereal parlour-maid had been persuaded to show me in unannounced.

"Good evening!" I said blandly. "I hope that's the latest."

The old lady beamed; she had no shame. Austin and Celia exchanged a rapid glance. They had decided beforehand upon their course of action. They always do.

"Won't you sit down?" said Celia.

"Make yourself comfortable, old fellow," said Austin.

"I think not," I replied coldly. "You seem to forget the last occasion upon which we met, and the treatment I received."

Aunt Josephine, as well she might, looked a little frightened. Celia and Austin, I need hardly assure you, remained exquisitely composed.

"We are far from forgetting it," said Austin. "Indeed, that is one of the reasons why we are so pleased to see you. We have something to say to you. Sit down, there's a good fellow!"

Could it really be that they wished to apologise? Here, if you like, was a triumph! I sat down.

"We want to speak to you rather seriously," Austin went on.

"For your own good," added Celia, staring into the fire.

"We want you," continued Austin, "to make us a little promise. We want you to break yourself of this foolish gambling habit before it is too late. Is that correct, Celia?"

"Perfectly correct, my darling."

I drew a long breath. "Well," I managed to stutter at last, "I like your cheek! Here I go and make a nice little profit for your Aunt Josephine——"

"Which she has taken," said Austin quietly.

"You've sold?" I cried.

"Yes, sir, I haf sold. The dear children wished it, and they are right. You will accept their advice, now and always, will you not?"



Photo by] [*W. A. Smith.*

THE PROCESSION TO THE CHURCH, ON APRIL 23, FOR THE CEREMONY OF DECORATING SHAKESPEARE'S TOMB WITH FLOWERS.

THE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

AT STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.

NOW that Shakespeare's native town hangs out her banners once again to welcome the yearly-increasing throng of visitors to her annual Festival, one is reminded that since her last year's commemoration—which, for the first time, was successfully extended over a total period of six weeks by the addition of a three weeks' summer season—less of Shakespeare's work has been represented on the London stage than in many recent years. For, owing to the well-deserved success of Sir Herbert Tree's splendid revival of "King Henry VIII.," even that generous manager himself has been able to give us only the one play. This limitation of his usually varied programme, however, we can safely trust the manager of His Majesty's Theatre to remove in the near future, when he realises his latest plans for the London celebration of Shakespeare's memory.

Apart from the long run of "King Henry VIII.," the only other Shakespearian productions of the year on the metropolitan stage have been the spirited revival of "The Merry Wives of Windsor," rendered notable for Mr. Oscar Asche's admirably truculent Falstaff, and the welcome innovation in music-hall programmes of famous scenes from Shakespeare, presented by Mr. Lewis Waller, Mr. and Mrs. Matheson Lang, and Mr. Eric Mayne. Apart from these few representations of well-known plays, the opportunities of the Shakespearian playgoer were even more limited than in former years by the fact that Mr. F. R. Benson visited London at Christmas to present only that very charming fantasy "The Piper," instead of his usual repertoire of "Tragedy, Comedy, History, Pastoral," repeated from his Stratford-upon-Avon revivals.

For the latest local commemoration of Stratford's great son, Mr. Benson has arranged, with the loyal co-operation of an even larger number of distinguished players than in any previous year, a programme of



Photo by] [*Anthony Tyler.*

THE FLAGS OF ALL NATIONS UNFURLED BY THEIR AMBASSADORS IN BRIDGE STREET.

delightful variety and of a scope which would have satisfied even Polonius himself in his elaborate subdivisions of the drama.

If there be any room for criticism at all, where so much generous unanimity in high endeavour inspires those chiefly responsible for the performance, within the space of but three weeks, of no fewer than fourteen plays of Shakespeare, it might, perhaps, take the form of a passing regret that such a galaxy of talent should be devoted almost entirely to plays which, even though they be of the

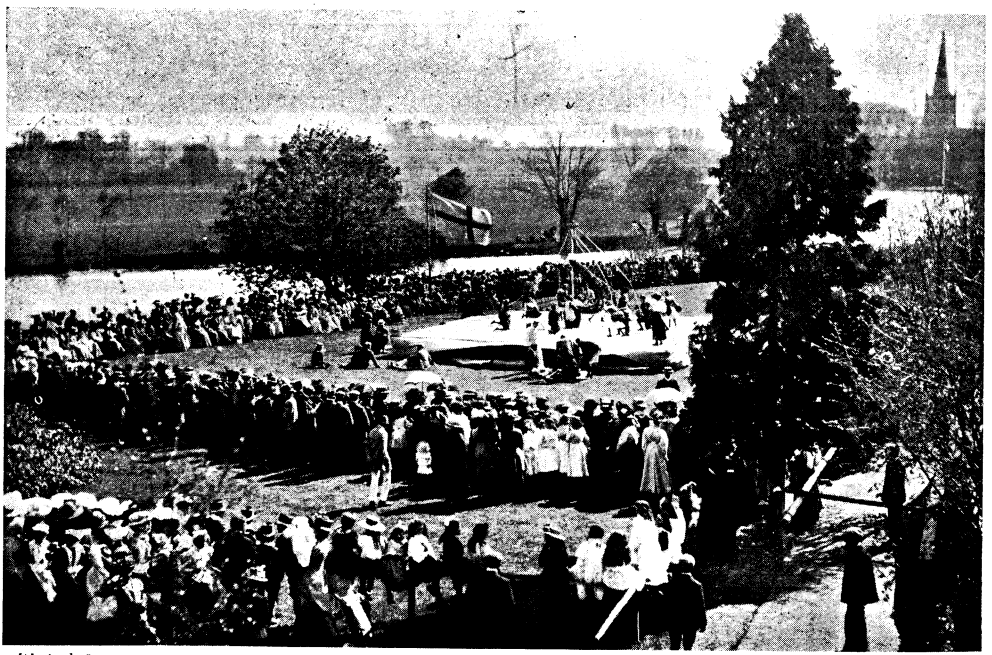


Photo by] [*Anthony Tyler.*

DANCING ROUND THE MAYPOLE IN THE GARDENS OF THE MEMORIAL THEATRE.



MISS ELLEN TERRY, WHO IS TO DISCOURSE ON "SHAKESPEARE'S HEROINES."

Photograph by Window & Grove.

poet's best, have been frequently seen of late, to the exclusion of the lesser tragedies, comedies, and chronicle-plays, which are seldom to be seen anywhere but at Stratford's Festival. If a constant visitor to these annual celebrations pauses to recall the rare interest of previous revivals of such otherwise neglected plays as "Timon of Athens," and "All's Well That Ends Well." And how welcome would have been a repetition of the whole series of Shakespeare's plays from English history, which formed a memorable event in the story of playgoing at Stratford a few years ago!

Perhaps some future programme may give us a further opportunity for such adventures



Photo by] [*D. McNeill.*

MR. OTHO STUART AS BRUTUS.

"Love's Labour's Lost," "Measure for Measure," "Cymbeline," the two parts of "Henry IV.," and the whole of "Henry VI.," he cannot but wish that some of the enthusiasm which is this year to be concentrated upon the more familiar of the poet's masterpieces might be devoted to representations of one or more of the only three plays never yet revived upon the Memorial stage—"Troilus and Cressida," "Titus Andronicus," among the less familiar of the poet's characters, and meantime we have three of the most important of the English histories repeated in the current programme, "Richard II."—with Mr. F. R. Benson again in his finely pathetic study of the hapless king—Henry V., with Mr. Benson as the hero of Agincourt, Mr. Nicholson as Fluellen, and Mr. Eric Maxon as Pistol, and Richard III., in which Mr. Benson plays Gloucester to the victorious



MR. F. R. BENSON, WHO PLAYS MARK ANTONY, RICHARD II., HENRY V., BENEDICK, PETRUCHIO, AND OTHER RÔLES.

Photograph by Chancellor, Dublin



Photo by] [*L. Caswall Smith.*

MISS MADGE TITHERADGE, WHO PLAYS JULIET.

Richmond of Mr. Maxon, the Lady Anne of Mrs. Benson, and the Elizabeth Woodville of Miss Violet Farebrother.

Passing from the moving story of English kingship, we are to see

> Gorgeous Tragedy
> In sceptred pall come sweeping by,

in the star-crossed love of "Romeo and Juliet," as represented by Mr. Lewis Waller and Miss Madge Titheradge, with Mr. Charles Quartermaine as the volatile Mercutio; and the strange, eventful history of the Moor who loved not wisely, but too well, as enacted by Mr. Oscar Asche and Miss Lily Brayton, with Mr. Herbert Grimwood as Iago, while "Macbeth" finds representatives in two other distinguished old Bensonians, Mr. Matheson Lang and Miss Hutin Britton. And that other great tragedy of ambition, "Julius Cæsar," is represented by Mr. Murray Carrington as Cæsar, Mr. Otho Stuart as Brutus, Mr. F. R. Benson as Mark Antony, and Mr. Henry Ainley as Cassius, to the Portia of Mrs. Benson, and the Calpurnia of Miss Violet Farebrother.

Comedy holds her own in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," with Mr. H. O. Nicholson as the fat knight, to the Merry Wives of Mrs. Benson and Miss Constance Collier, and the Mrs. Quickly of Miss Elinor Aickin; "Twelfth Night," in which it is hoped Sir Herbert Tree will be able to appear as Malvolio, to the Countess Olivia of Mrs. Benson and the Viola of Miss Constance



Photo by] [*Langfier.*

MR. LEWIS WALLER AS ROMEO.



MRS. F. R. BENSON, WHO PLAYS MRS. FORD, BEATRICE, KATHARINA, LADY ANNE, AND OTHER RÔLES.

Photograph by Lafayette, Dublin.

Collier, with Mr. Moffat Johnston as Sir Toby, Mr. Eric Maxon as Orsino, and Mr. Harry Caine as Feste; "The Taming of the Shrew," with Mr. F. R. Benson as Petruchio and Mrs. Benson as Katharina, and "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

Miss Violet Vanbrugh, at the second Mr. and Mrs. Benson, and at the third Mr. Fred Terry and Miss Julia Neilson. Miss Neilson thus makes her reappearance in the *rôle* which she played in Mr. George Alexander's charming revival of the play

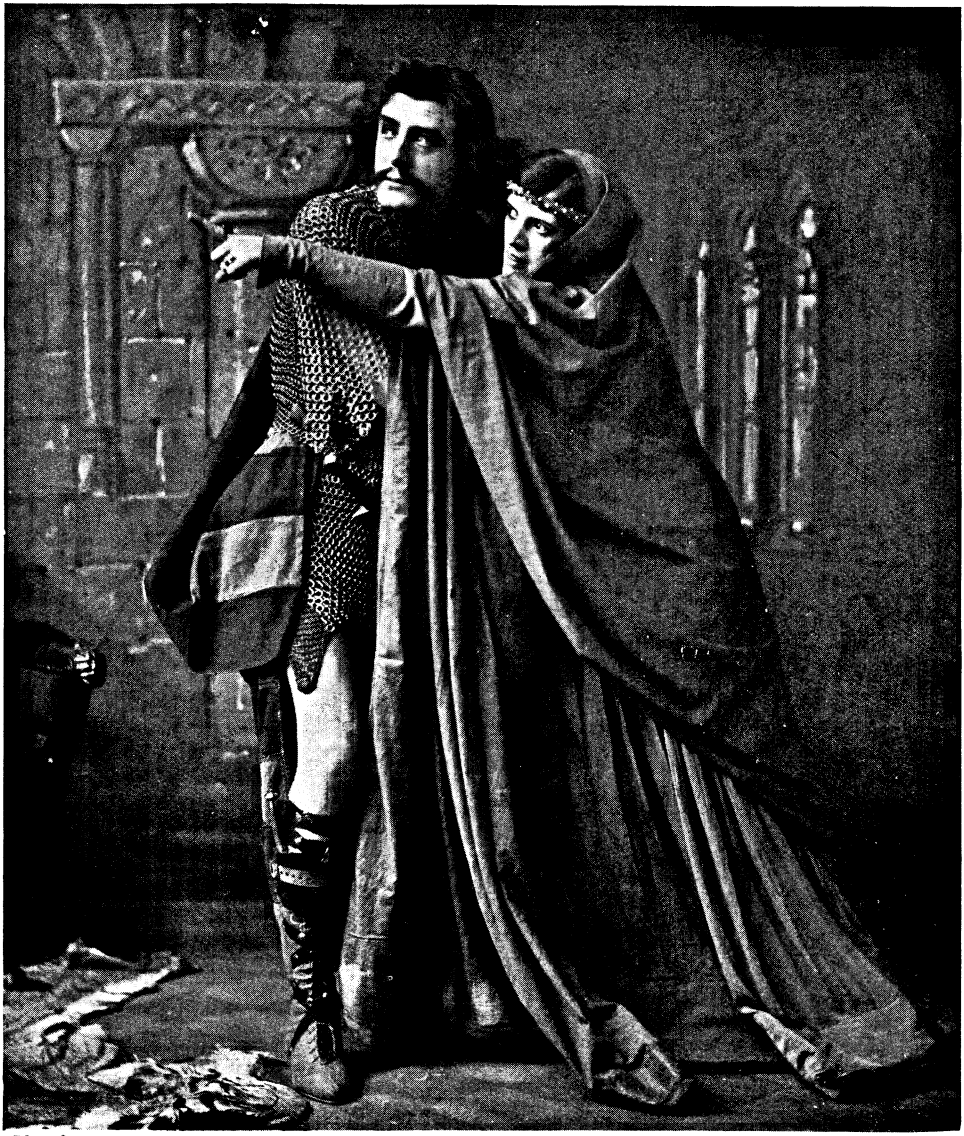
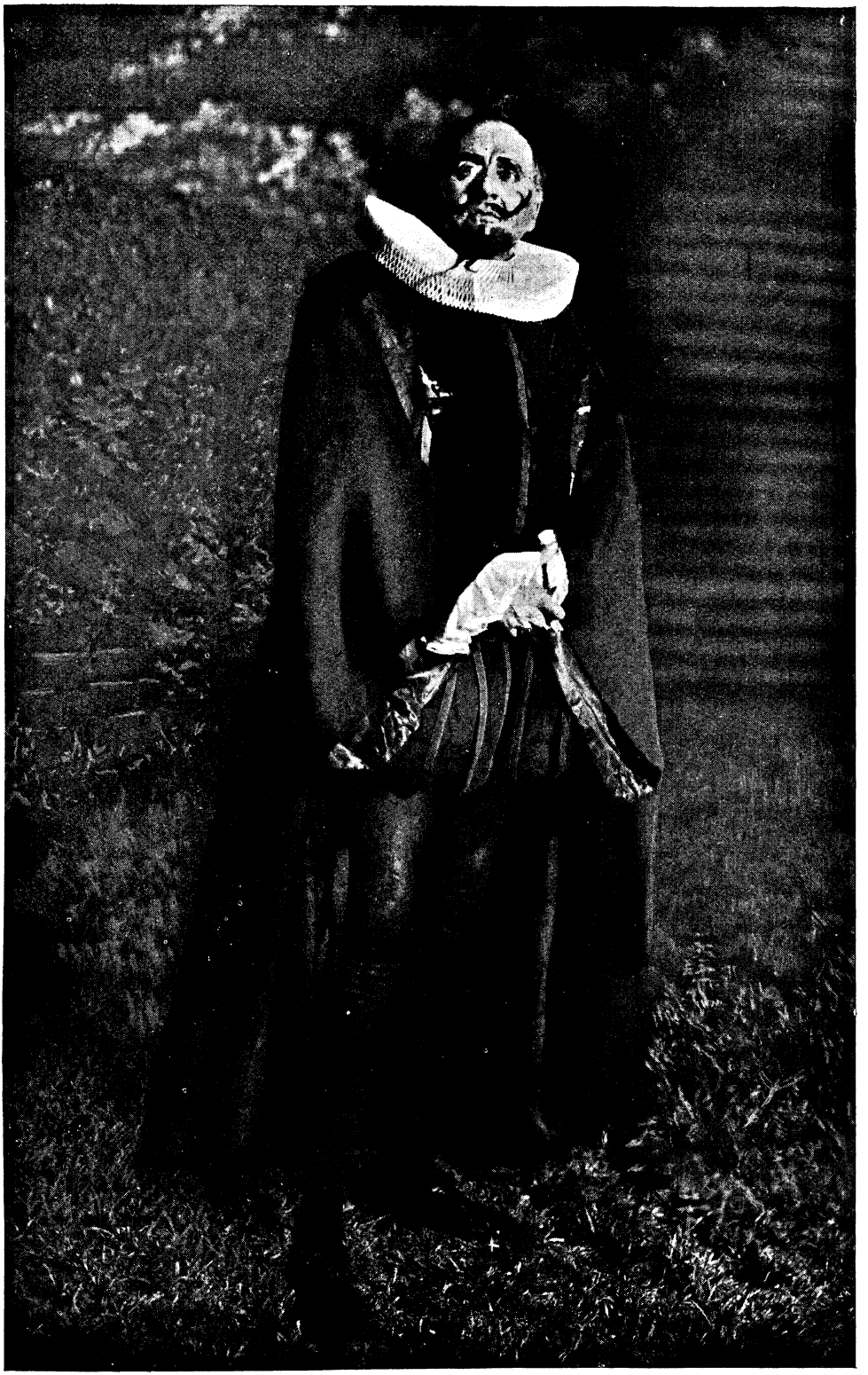


Photo by] [*Ellis & Walery.*

MR. MATHESON LANG AND MISS HUTIN BRITTON IN "MACBETH."

Another comedy, "Much Ado About Nothing," will be distinguished by no less than three different pairs of lovers making a match of their two mad wits, for the Benedick and Beatrice of the first performance will be Mr. Laurence Irving and at the St. James's Theatre more than a dozen years ago. In that production, it is interesting to recall, Mr. Fred Terry, who now makes his first appearance as Benedick, was a very jovial Don Pedro.

In "As You Like It," Miss Lena Ashwell



SIR HERBERT TREE AS MALVOLIO.

Photograph by the Illustrations Bureau.



MISS VIOLET VANBRUGH, WHO PLAYS BEATRICE.

Photograph by Ellis & Walery.



Photo by] [*L. Caswall Smith.*

MISS CONSTANCE COLLIER, WHO PLAYS VIOLA, PORTIA, AND MRS. PAGE.

appears for the first time as Rosalind, to the Orlando of Mr. Henry Ainley, after many years devoted to the modern drama, although one of her earliest successes was made in the more Shakespearian manner of the Lyceum Theatre, where she created the part of Elaine in Mr. Comyns Carr's poetical play, "King Arthur." Curiously enough, one of Miss Ashwell's very few appearances in Shakespearian work was made in the doublet and hose of a masculine character, such as Rosalind counterfeits to be, for she played the uncrowned king of England, the youthful Edward V., in Sir Henry Irving's last revival of "Richard III." Since then she has given us, in Mr. Forbes-Robertson's revival of "Othello" at the Lyric Theatre, a few years ago, an Emilia whose denunciation of the Moor over the body of the murdered Desdemona still lives in the memory.



MR. OSCAR ASCHE AS OTHELLO.

Photograph by C. Histed.



MISS LILY BRAYTON AS DESDEMONA.

Photograph by Rita Martin.

In "The Merchant of Venice," Mr. Otho Stuart, who last year played Bassanio to the Portia of Miss Ellen Terry, now appears as Gratiano to the Bassanio of Mr. Eric Maxon, the Portia of Miss Constance Collier, and the Shylock of Mr. Benson.

Pre-Shakespearian drama, represented in former years by works ranging from the Orestean trilogy of Aeschylus to the "Edward II." of Shakespeare's immediate predecessor, Christopher Marlowe, is this year supplied in four "Mystery" plays from the Chester cycle. Work later than Shakespeare's is to be seen in "The Critic" of Sheridan, who has hitherto been represented on the Memorial stage by his more famous plays, "The School for Scandal" and "The Rivals." Then, after eighteenth-century comedy, comes work in still more modern vein in certain selections from the repertoire of the Irish players from the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, who present, in the course of two performances, no fewer than six plays by Mr. W. B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, Mr. S. L. Robinson, and Mr. J. M. Synge. The Irish players who will thus make their appearance at the Festival include Miss Sara Allgood, Miss Maire O'Neill, Miss Eileen O'Doherty, Miss Maire Nie Shiebhlaigh, Miss Ethnee Magea, and Messrs. Arthur Sinclair, Fred



Photo by] [*L. Caswall Smith.*

MR. HENRY AINLEY AS CASSIUS.



Photo by] [*Ellis & Walery.*

MR. FRED TERRY, WHO PLAYS BENEDICK.



MISS JULIA NEILSON AS BEATRICE.

Photograph by Ellis & Walery.

O'Donovan, J. M. Kerrigan, J. A. O'Rourke, Sydney T. Morgan, and U. Wright. The one other modern author included in the programme is the American poet, Josephine

at the St. James's Theatre. In this Mr. Benson and Miss Marion Terry play their original parts of the Piper and Veronika.

"Though last, not least in love," comes



Photo by] [*The Illustrations Bureau.*

MR. F. R. BENSON AND MISS MARION TERRY IN "THE PIPER."

Preston Peabody, whose picturesque version of the story of the Pied Piper won the prize offered for a new play for production at last year's Festival, and afterwards aroused much interest among metropolitan playgoers

into the list of this year's arrangements the discourse on "Shakespeare's Heroines" which Miss Ellen Terry, fresh from her triumphal progress through America, has promised to deliver to the Festival audience.

Those who read Miss Terry's article on the same theme in the WINDSOR MAGAZINE for last December will have some foretaste of the charm of her discourse (Miss Terry deprecates the word "lecture" as too didactic), with all the added grace of diction and impersonation which the great actress gives to her opinions about the poet's heroines when discussing them with her audience.

Other lectures on appropriate themes, and an Exhibition of Armour and Heraldic Designs illustrating the periods covered by Shakespeare's plays from English history, are among the interests provided for the visitors in the intervals of their busy play-going, from the opening of the Festival with the unfurling of the Flags of All Countries by their respective ambassadors or other distinguished representatives, throughout its varied course. One of the most attractive events of the whole Festival will again be found in the May Day revels by the children of Stratford-upon-Avon and the surrounding district, charmingly planned by Mrs. F. R. Benson, who will again be Mistress of the Ceremonies, and on May 4 will be held the annual Old English Sports, including wrestling, fencing, quarter-staff, and single-stick contests, skipping matches, and old-world dances. And for the further extension of the various indoor and outdoor interests, other than those of the actual theatre itself, which have of late developed around the Memorial Buildings, there is to be a Folk Conference, which will be attended by many strenuous workers in the several causes of Folk Art, Song, and Dance, which now find one of their principal centres in Shakespeare's little town.

Out of this conference may possibly come yet further developments of the scheme successfully inaugurated by last year's Summer Season, at a period of the year when many who are not free to make holiday in the spring are able to attend, in addition to the large number of Stratford's over-seas visitors of the later season. We understand that it is possible that in the course of this extension of Stratford's annual celebration, Mr. and Mrs. Benson may be able to repeat, with especial appropriateness in this year of Coronation, their long series of productions, in chronological order, of Shakespeare's plays from our nation's history, which must ever be regarded as one of the most valuable achievements of their work at the Memorial Theatre. Illuminating as were these performances when given for the first time as a consecutive series, they would to-day have even a further interest in connection with the recent revival of pride in our national arts and crafts to which Stratford has lent the prestige of her unique associations. One can think of no more potent incentive towards an intelligent patriotism than the frequent repetition of that vivid series of plays.

For the benefit of those who have not yet experienced the charms of playgoing at Stratford-upon-Avon, one cannot but yield to the desire to quote from a delightful appreciation which appears in Mr. C. E. Montague's brilliant volume of "Dramatic Values," lately collected from his contributions to *The Manchester Guardian*, and published by Messrs. Methuen & Co. Mr. Montague says: "A thing not easily to be spoilt for you in Stratford is the way you go to the theatre there—at any rate, on a fine evening in late April, in a year when the spring has not been soured by an ill-placed frost . . . You go into it from a garden by a river, alive just now with little jocund noises; there is that sound which to hear is like drinking cool water in summer—the dip of oars and the little tinkle of laughter from people coming home in boats at twilight; beyond the stream some lambs are leaping about in a meadow of juicy grass, or posting back to their mothers in silent thirst. Wherever you look, behold! it is very good. Behind you the little ordered country town is in the oddly-gay mixed light of lamps early lit and of the lengthening daylight; in front, beyond the lambs, the fields rise and fall softly till they go out of sight, the quintessence of the contained and friendly English midland landscape. When these things have possessed your souls with content, you go through a door and see, it may be, 'As You Like It,' acted by artists on whom they are working too — at any rate, you think so. The audience, on the whole, is picked and fit, for there is no mere fashion of coming here to bring many quite vacuous spectators; no one comes who does not care for plays or acting; people laugh at the right place in comedy; the space between them and the actors is not the non-conductor of emotion that it often seems to be elsewhere; it quivers with communicative quickness; you do not have a sense that artist's intention and public's perception are fumbling for each other in a dark room; you feel the stir of a common intellectual excitement changing all the hard, disparate atoms in the auditorium into one quickened

brain, whose joint apprehension is not, as in most theatres, the apprehension of the dullest, but that of the eager and clear, the ones with speculation in their eyes. What dead silence receives, in most theatres, Le Beau's discreet civility—

"Hereafter, in a better world than this,
I shall desire more love and knowledge of you:

"It is not, or was not, so at Stratford; you feel a whole audience to be delightedly tasting flavours and valuing qualities of what they hear.

"After an act you step out into the more than pastoral quietude of a country town settling to rest after the day. The growth of stillness, since you went in, is measured for you by the new clearness of the little distance sounds—voices at far-off cottage doors, or the shouts of a few children late at their play in the meadows. When the play ends, outside there is white river mist and dead silence. You all go to bed like one household. Half an hour after the Oresteia was done, there was not a sound in the High Street; at midnight the footsteps of two belated actors and their voices at the corner as they said 'Good night' rang like a sound in midnight Oxford."

THE BLUEBELL WOOD.

THE wood's a chain of little lakes,
All lovely shimm'ring drifts of blue,
Where wind its darling wavelets breaks
Into soft spray of rainbow dew,
The wood's set round with cherry trees,
With boughs, all cloud-wreath'd, drooping low,
Till o'er the bluebells softest breeze
Wafts petals white as winter's snow.

The wood's where earliest thrushes lilt,
Where fluting note of blackbird rings,
Where fairy whitethroat, all a-tilt
On honied gorse-bloom softly sings,
The wood's a place of fragrance sweet,
Of filmy mists like ghosts of flow'rs,
Of chimes atune to tripping feet,
Where bluebells count but happy hours.

LORD STRANLEIGH, PHILANTHROPIST.

BY ROBERT BARR.

VI. LORD STRANLEIGH ON GUARD.

"I'M going to take the rest-cure," announced Stranleigh. "This 'back to the land' theory is all very well so long as you don't practise it."

"Do you regret, then, your experiment with the phalanstery?" said Blake. "It did cost a lot of money."

"Oh, money!" cried Stranleigh, with a grimace. "I've just had a report this morning from my man of business in London that has quite discouraged me."

The secretary looked up, an expression of disquiet on his face. The financial affairs of his lordship were completely out of Mr. Blake's range, but he knew that Stranleigh had been spending the coin in a most lavish manner, and this sort of thing could not be continued indefinitely without disaster. Blake's position was a most lucrative one, and he did not wish to see it jeopardised. A few years more in Stranleigh's employ, and his invested accumulations would make him independent so far as income was concerned; therefore he fervently hoped his young master would moderate his excessive expenditure.

"A gloomy report?" he asked anxiously.

"Well, that depends on the point of view. For some time now I have been trying, as you know, to ameliorate in a measure a few of the evils by which we are surrounded. I rather posed—before myself, of course, not in public—as being a self-sacrificing man. Now, it appears from this report received to-day that, despite all my efforts, my income has increased by a quarter of a million."

"Oh," replied Blake, his brow clearing, "that's the state of things, is it? I dare say most people would wish they had no greater cause of worry. Then, so far as self-sacrifice is concerned, you did stick to the digging of the earth for nearly two months in the spring, when I'm sure you didn't like it."

"Of course I didn't. I became impressed with the futility of labour, and instead of experiencing that sense of exaltation which writers tell us follows honest toil, I merely knew myself to be a fool. All that I could produce from an acre of ground in a year would amount to very little; therefore my industry was folly. There was not even left to me the joy of slumber, for although I am considered something of an athlete, practical horticulture made my bones ache so much that I could not sleep at night. What's that poem about sheep and the rich man, and sleep and the poor man?"

"I'm sure I don't know," replied Blake.

"Why don't you know? You're my private secretary, and it's the business of a private secretary to know ever so much more than his employer. A private secretary should let his gifts so shine forth, through his chief, that the public overestimate the qualities of that chief. I know at least a score of incompetents, especially in Parliament, ignorant asses, who are winning the plaudits of the populace simply because each has a brilliant private secretary; yet here I want an insignificant, little, untruthful verse, and you can't give it to me."

"How does it go? I'll look it up in the book of quotations."

"Oh, blow your book of quotations! If I remembered how it went, I shouldn't need any assistance. It's something like this—

> Whence cometh sheep
> To the rich man's door?
> Whence cometh sleep
> To the bed that's poor?

My bed was poor enough during our gardening spasm, but very little sleep came to it."

"I never heard the verse," said Blake, "and I don't see much coherency in it. I know the doors of some rich men, but the sheep don't gather there—at least, not in London. The police keep these ferocious animals away."

"Quite so, Blake—quite so. The point is, however, that I am becoming seriously alarmed about my mental condition. I

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called myself a fool a few minutes ago, and I'm prepared to prove that statement."

"No necessity," replied Blake glibly.

Stranleigh laughed.

"You're willing to take my word for it?"

"Perfectly."

"But I can furnish evidence that most other people are fools, too."

"Carlyle said that years ago."

"Look here, Blake, although I complain of your lack of knowledge, you mustn't infer that I want too much information. Some of your remarks are singularly inopportune, and you should remember that when a man complains of his own mental equipment, he always does so to a person undoubtedly his intellectual inferior."

"I thought you said, a while ago, that most men owe their brilliancy to private secretaries?"

"Every rule has its exceptions, Blake. Let us prove exceptional. The point I am endeavouring to make is this: I have tried to carry out some of my own ideas and one or two of other people's. Failure in both cases. When I advertised for an idea, and was willing to pay for it, the response was overwhelming. Have you had time to examine any more of the letters?"

"I have looked through them all."

"Industrious man! How many good ideas did you get?"

"Two—three at most."

"A modern rendition of the needle in the haystack. What was the idea that most commended itself to you?"

"That your lordship should go to prison for the good of the country."

"Well, Blake, aware as you must be that I do everything by deputy, I can't see why you're so cheerful about the proposal. However, though I admit a taste of gaol would probably do my private secretary good, I nevertheless fail to see what benefit could accrue to the country, which would thus be compelled to support him."

"The writer, who hails from Plymouth, points out, with some show of reason, that no scheme of philanthropy is of any avail while England lies open to conquest by the foreigner. The question which, according to him, dwarfs all other problems is national defence. He refers to the ease with which England can be invaded, and cites William the Norman, the Duke of Monmouth, and William, Prince of Orange."

"Yes; but the Duke of Monmouth got his head taken off for landing at Lyme Regis."

"Certainly; yet the other two captured the country, and, so far as invasion is concerned, the Duke was successful. He failed through having no competent general when once he got inland. The unmilitary Duke lost his head, first, at the battle of Sedgemoor, and, secondly, on Tower Hill. Your correspondent suggests that you charter a foreign ship, and land either at Salcombe or Lyme Regis, then march your men inland until you are surrounded and captured. The foreigners would probably be dismissed, while you would be sent to penal servitude. This would arouse the country in two directions—first, regarding the ease with which you landed your men, and, secondly, through sympathy with you, whose intention had been to awaken the people to their danger. There would be agitation for your release, and the whole question of coastal defence would be ventilated thoroughly."

"Excellent—excellent! I will finance the expedition, and you, Blake, shall lead it. The glory of martyrdom shall be yours."

"I'm so capable a private secretary that I could not think of depriving your lordship of my services."

"True, Blake—true. Besides, we are both going in for the rest-cure."

"Nothing better for that than one of His Majesty's prisons, my lord."

"I never contradict a man of experience, Blake. Send the writer of this letter fifty pounds for it; tell him it will be thought over, and, if adopted, an additional four hundred and fifty forwarded. We are now heading for the simple life and freedom from brain-work. How long will it take you to pack up?"

"Oh, half an hour."

"All right. Tell the chauffeur to have the car round in that time, with petrol enough to run us a couple of hundred miles, although to-day we shall go but fifty or thereabouts."

The spot where this conversation took place was Stranleigh's estate in Dorsetshire. The party of three ran to Exeter, where they enjoyed their midday meal, then along the excellent south-west high road to Ashburton, and south-east to lovely Totnes, next south-west again to Kingsbridge, celebrated for white beer and the peppery Peter Pindar. From this point Salcombe Estuary was skirted, until the road turned directly eastward. At Chillington the car deflected straight south over a somewhat inferior road to Chivelstone, next east through South Allington, and finally southward, past a

water-mill, through a deep valley, and along a lane by the stream, so rough that the automobile made very slow and difficult progress. The hills on either side were densely wooded. It seemed as if the motorists had come to the end of all things, and, indeed, they were at the end of England, approaching its most southerly point, excepting only the Lizard and Land's End.

At last the valley widened, and there broke gloriously upon the tourists a view of the blue sea, with a wild, rocky headland jutting into it to the east. Here Blake sprang out to open an obstructing gate, and the chauffeur drove his machine through, the wheels sinking deep into the sand. Stranleigh stepped out of the car to stretch his limbs. Blake, closing the gate, came alongside, looking doubtfully at the automobile.

"I hope," said Blake, "you can get it out of here."

"Can you turn round, Henri?" asked Stranleigh.



"A naval-looking man . . . overhearing the last remark, chimed in."

"Of a surety, my lord," replied the confident Frenchman.

"Then I think you'd better drive back through the gateway again, where you will be on firm ground at least."

While Henri accomplished this, Stranleigh and Blake walked across the cove towards a mill-house that stood beside the stream, and from this building several children peered

out at the wonderful machine, the like of which they had probably never seen before. Opposite the cottage, by the very edge of the sea, stood the ruins of a stone structure, roofless, its walls concealed by a luxurious growth of vegetation.

"That," said Stranleigh, "is the remains of Lannacombe Mill, and, curiously enough, it is, in a way, an object-lesson on the theme of our correspondent who would put me in prison. During our last war with France, a privateer sent a boatload of men into this cove. They took from the miller everything they could lay their hands on, even to the bed on which his wife and her new-born child lay. I often wonder if that little Englishman, when he grew up, wished for another war, so that he might avenge the cowardly attack on his parents. The robbery took place as night was falling, and it happened that at the moment the miller held in a bag his year's earnings, represented by good British gold. He ran upstairs and flung the bag out into the dusk, hoping it would thus escape the searchers, who, however, were not easily baffled. They took the miller's lantern, and searched outside for anything that could be found, and next morning the privateer was gone.

"The miller was up at daybreak, and became more and more despondent as he failed to find the bag. When called in to breakfast, he raised his hands and his eyes toward Heaven, deploring his ruin, and then, in the notch of a large tree adjacent to the mill-house, he saw the leathern bag, which had never fallen to the ground at all, and had been tied so well that not a coin escaped."

The two slowly climbed the very steep hill.

"Where have we got to?" gasped Blake, rather out of breath.

"I told you—Lannacombe Mill."

"Yes, but what part of the Devonshire coast?"

"Just round the corner to the east is the Start, and when we get up a little higher, I'll show you Prawle Point to the west."

When they reached the top, both paused before the striking scene presented to them of the iron coast, where acres of black jagged rocks extended from the steep cliffs far out into the sea, like the lower jaw of a gigantic alligator. Stranleigh said the scene was sublime; Blake called it horrible.

A naval-looking man strolled up with a telescope under his arm, and, overhearing the last remark, chimed in—

"You may well say that, sir; but you should see it in a south-west gale, with the waves rolling in, torn to pieces on them rocks."

"A ship wouldn't have much chance," said Blake, "once she touched the reef."

"No chance at all, sir. It's a terrible coast. On a March night, in '91, the London steamer *Marana* went ashore, and twenty-five hands lost, and an hour later the barque *Dryad*, of Liverpool, all hands lost, twenty-one of them, and next morning not a plank or a spar of either vessel to be found. Fifty-two lives lost that night—men and boats ground to bits on them rocks."

"Cheerful place!" muttered Blake, and Stranleigh, turning to the man, changed the subject.

"Where's Morgan?"

"Morgan, sir?"

"Yes, head of this coast-guard station."

The man waved his hand towards a row of two-storied houses that seemed brand-new and ridiculously out of place, as if they had been taken from a street on the outskirts of London. These incongruous-looking suburban villas were situated in the midst of a most trimly-kept piece of level ground, part lawn and part garden. In front of them rose the white-painted flag-pole, with its cross-spar set at an angle of forty-five, thin rope slightly flapping, but no flag flying.

"Oh, sir, this be'ant a coast-guard—leastways, it's abandoned."

"Abandoned? What do you mean?"

"Why, sir, I means just what I say. This was a coast-guard station once, but the men are all ordered away, and won't be here no more. I'm only the caretaker until the place is sold."

"Oh, it's to be sold, is it?" cried Stranleigh in amazement. "Why, these houses seem new."

"They are, sir—not a year old, I dare say—but you can buy them now for a good deal less than they cost—ground and all, sir, free'old."

"Really! That is very interesting, but I did not come as a purchaser. In the past I have spent many restful days on this eagle's nest, Morgan kindly providing me with board and lodging. He was not certain he had the legal right to take boarders, but I persuaded him to risk it. Can I do the same with you?"

The caretaker shook his head, and with visible reluctance declined the offer.

"That's impossible, sir. All the houses are empty except one, and in that there is only a shakedown for myself and an oil

stove where I cook what vittles I need. It's a mighty lonesome place here, and I shall be glad to get back to town again."

Stranleigh glanced at the sun, low down in the west.

"In that case, Blake, we'll have to be off as quick as possible. I hope the motor won't break down before we get out of the wilderness. I'm very much obliged for your information, caretaker, and if this bit of gold will mitigate the loneliness, you are more than welcome to it."

The guardian was profuse in his thanks for the unexpected size of the tip, because even small donations were scarce in that locality. The two descended the hill past the ruins, over the stream and through the gate, where Henri patiently awaited them.

"Make for Kingsbridge," said his master, "over the same roads by which you came. Drive carefully out of this valley, and when you reach the highway, forget that there's a speed limit. I want to be in Kingsbridge before dark."

They negotiated the rough lane beside the stream with success, and completed the run to Kingsbridge in the fastest time on record, but without molestation. The elasticity of the law is wonderful when you get more than two hundred miles west of London. Very soon after their arrival in Kingsbridge, Stranleigh and Blake sat down to an excellent dinner at "The King's Arms," an ancient hostelry that had begun existence as a church house, entered an era of prosperity as a coaching inn, and now was modernised to meet the motor traffic. Stranleigh had been silent since leaving the lonely coastguard station. Ordering a tankard of white beer as an experiment, he said to Blake—

"This meal doubtless excels the cuisine of our friend the caretaker."

"Did you really intend to stop on that horrible headland?"

"Certainly, if Morgan had been there."

"Why, a person would go melancholy mad in a week!"

"Oh, there's more going on than you think. You see, it is nearly the southernmost point of England, and the shipping of the world passes it. Every now and then you may witness a flotilla of torpedo-boat destroyers, one black boat following another round the Start, making for Plymouth. Then there are real battleships and cruisers, and nearly every day huge passenger boats, American liners, all the German leviathans, and the monsters of the White Star Line. Brilliantly lighted up at night, these marine giants always remind me of Kipling's simile—'like a grand hotel.' Even on a calm day the sea is perpetually quarrelling with the pointed rocks—the most admirable object-lesson of persistence I know—and in a storm, when it comes to blows, it is the most majestic sight I have ever seen."

Blake made a grimace and shuddered.

"That little spit of sand down by the mill is the finest possible early morning bathing-place," continued Stranleigh, "with the exciting advantage of strong currents. I am never sure, when I plunge in there, but that I may be compelled to land at Dartmouth or Torquay. I wish I could take a header there to-morrow morning."

"You have abandoned the idea of the coast-guard station, then?"

"Abandoned it? Not likely, with the example of that incessant marine battle before me. No, to-morrow will be your busy day. I have already discovered that there is a train for London at eight o'clock in the morning, with a restaurant car. It will land you at Paddington at one-thirty, just after you have consumed an excellent Great Western lunch. You will take a taxi to the office of Berkim and Duncannon, Old Jewry. Ask them to get into touch with the Government, and buy for me the freehold of Lannacombe coast-guard station, getting the deal through as quickly as possible.

"Then take train to Southampton, and call on the captain of my yacht, which you will order him to transform into a cargo steamer. Find the best house-fitting emporium in the town, and purchase an equipment complete for five bedrooms, two sitting-rooms, and a kitchen. Put all this on the yacht, telling the captain to land the goods at Lannacombe Bay, if the weather is fine; if not, to push on to Salcombe Harbour and await further orders. You may then return to London."

"One moment, Lord Stranleigh. Before going further, allow me to become accustomed to the amateurish idiocy of your proposal."

"Which part of it? The coast-guard station or the furnishing thereof?"

"The furniture proposition. Of course, the buying of the coast-guard station merely means that you will spend good money to acquire property that you can't give away. The English may be mostly fools, as you remarked this morning, but they are not so imbecile as to buy several suburban villas on an inaccessible rock."

"I don't intend to sell again," said

Stranleigh, with great good-nature, "but I am evolving a plan to dispose of this desirable marine property to the Government that now heedlessly parts with it. Your main objection I take to be the acquiring of furniture; yet much as I love the simple life, I can't reside in empty houses."

"Certainly not; but you purpose making a freighter of your beautiful yacht, and will knock more paint and varnish off the craft, and break more of her fittings, than the whole thing is worth. Even imagine that done, there may not be another day this year when you can land the stuff at Lannacombe Cove."

"All right, Blake. What do you propose?"

"I propose a little spasm of sanity for a change. I suggest that you telegraph your instructions to the solicitors, thus saving the whole forenoon to-morrow, besides encouraging the telegraph people. Then select what furniture you need right here in Kingsbridge. The seller will gladly cart it over to Lannacombe, and his men would carry it up the hill, placing it in the particular houses you choose. You thus assist local trade—always a popular thing to do—and the shopkeeper will be most anxious to please you. Doubtless your yacht will be saved from shipwreck, and I shall escape an unnecessary journey to London."

"Why, I thought you were tired of this place? Nothing doing, according to you."

"I'm not tired of Kingsbridge and Salcombe. The tired feeling comes upon me among those rocks. Still, if you furnish a villa or two, and engage a cook who will equal the range I buy, I'm content to spend the whole summer at Lannacombe."

"Right you are, Blake! I think of Minerva whenever you begin to discourse."

"I've another suggestion to make. Telegraph to the captain of your yacht, commanding him to bring her round to Salcombe Harbour, and not to leave behind your most delectable *chef*. He may steam right up to Kingsbridge, if you don't mind your yacht being left high and dry when the tide goes out. We might live on the yacht until a telegram comes from your solicitors saying that the deal with the Government is completed. Then the furniture can go at once to Lannacombe."

"Very well, make it so, as the captain says," agreed Stranleigh, rising and yawning. "I've had so much fresh air to-day on the motor, and so much salt air at Lannacombe, that I'm sleepy. I will show you an example of early rising to-morrow morning by deputy. You are appointed. I shall expect the telegrams sent and the furniture chosen before I breakfast; and, by the way, make arrangements for the telephone to be left at the coastguard station. Good night."

Kingsbridge seems to be so called because no king ever entered it, and there is no river and no bridge within its boundaries. Next day Stranleigh strolled round the quaint old place, keeping a wary eye out for Blake, whom he avoided with much ingenuity, for he knew that his secretary wished to consult him further about the furniture, and Stranleigh didn't want to be bothered. In one of these sudden side-trackings to circumvent the energetic Blake, Stranleigh entered the yard of the fine old church, and was arrested by an epitaph, which he wrote down in his note-book, wondering whether the poet of the town, Peter Pindar, composed it—

> Here lie I at the chancel door,
> Here lie I because I'm poor;
> The farther in, the more you'll pay,
> Here lie I as warm as they.

"This chap seems to have been contented with his lot. I wonder what, besides getting into the church, he would have done with his money if he had it? We millionaires are a sorry, unimaginative crew. Now, if Gilbert Chesterton, or H. G. Wells, or George Bernard Shaw had several millions each, they would certainly do something original. The American millionaire gives money to found a university, of which there are too many already. The English millionaire leaves his cash to hospitals. Now and then a rich man tries to get out of the rut, but without conspicuous success. Carnegie, the man of iron, representing strength, gives New York a library; Tate, the sugar-maker, representing sweetness, gives London a picture gallery. Out of the strong came forth sweetness, said Samson. I was going to apply that text somehow to the ingots of steel and cubes of sugar, but my brain is quite evidently becoming numb. Civilisation is undoing me. I hope it will harden when it confronts realities among the rocks of Lannacombe."

Several days later a telegram came from the London solicitors, announcing to Stranleigh that he now possessed the coveted coastguard station. Once they were installed at Lannacombe, Stranleigh said to Blake—

"Do you know why I brought you here?"

"Yes," replied Blake gloomily—"to undergo the rest-cure."

"Well, not exactly. I desired you, rather, to witness the effects of the rest-cure upon

me. Bitterly will you regret your scoffing at the indolence I proposed for both of us. Now your busy days begin. Is the typewriter in good working order?"

"Excellent."

"You brought with you all the supplies necessary for that diabolical machine?"

remarks. Nothing *can* happen at this fag-end of creation."

Stranleigh went on calmly, unheeding all innuendo—

"Every letter I dictate must be done in duplicate, so that I may possess exact impressions of all my correspondence. This eyrie



"The men landed without mishap or molestation."

"Everything."

"Very good. Now, I wish a history written of all my doings from the time I landed upon this rock until the day I leave."

"I can do that with a lead pencil, and in five minutes each day—that is, if I have to record your bodily exertions and your brilliant

is going to be the busiest spot in the Empire, and for the next two or three months much more important than London."

"Important to whom, my lord?"

"Never mind. Yours not to make reply, yours not to reason why, yours but to do your noble six hundred words every fifteen

minutes on that machine. Now, Blake, your first letter will be a telegram, and your first telegram a 'phone call. Get into communication with whatever telegraph office or telephone wire connects, and send the solicitors a message to this effect. Thank them for their promptness in buying Lannacombe. Inform them how to communicate with me by telegraph or telephone. Ask them to discover how many coast-guard stations are for sale. Instruct them to purchase for me all that are in the market. If any have been sold already to private persons, the solicitors must get in touch with those private owners, and either buy, or rent for the summer, the said coast-guard stations."

"Great Heavens," ejaculated Blake, "that's what I call a large order! Shall I ask them to make a bid for the rest of the island?"

"Now, what I want from you, Blake, is prompt action and not attempted sarcasm. Send that message over the wire, and return for further instructions."

When Blake came back, Stranleigh said—

"Now take this down in shorthand as accurately as possible, type it out, then read it to me. I'll merely suggest what I want, and leave the details entirely to your carrying out. It is rather a particular piece of work, and I am anxious there should be no publicity and no bungling. I wish to engage for the summer two hundred men at a price just a little more than the current wage of such men in their respective localities. All their expenses shall be paid, and they shall enjoy free board and lodging while in my service.

"These men must possess naval or military training; none are to be over fifty years of age; all must speak English intelligently, and if acquainted with England and its manners and customs, so much the better. Fifty of these men are to be selected in Hamburg, subjects of the German Emperor; fifty are to come from Amsterdam, citizens of Holland; fifty from Antwerp, true Belgians; fifty from Dunkirk, Cherbourg, or any of the ports between these two, citizens of France. The pay of these men shall begin immediately, and they are to hold themselves at my disposal in or near the ports from which they are selected, so that, when I call for them at any time with my yacht, they will be ready to embark within an hour of receiving notice.

"Meanwhile, purchase and have delivered here military tents, sufficient for the shelter of two hundred men, in accordance with military rule. Having no idea myself how many men a commander puts in a tent, you will acquire this information. The tents are to be packed in one of the empty houses. Secure also cooking equipment for such a military camp. During the intervals learn from headquarters what are the duties of a coast-guard man."

As Stranleigh became silent, Blake looked up, a quizzical smile on his face.

"Is that all?" he asked.

"All for the present, Mr. Blake. There is, of course, much more to follow."

"Yes, I see dimly ahead many things that may follow."

"I dare say you do. Have you any comments to offer?"

"Merely a suggestion, Lord Stranleigh. You choose an inconvenient spot upon the coast. It would have been better to select the coast-guard station on Portland Bill, if there is one at that point."

"Why?"

"Because it is so much more handy for Portland Prison, where aristocratic contraveners of the law are placed in retirement."

Stranleigh laughed.

"Oh, you see breakers ahead, do you?"

"Yes, law-breakers."

Again Stranleigh laughed.

"Coming from you, Blake, that isn't so bad. Still, there is nothing illegal in the task assigned to you. If it comes to the worst, you can always prove stupidity on your part, and claim that you didn't fathom the nefariousness of my designs. Should any contravention of the statutes ensue, I'll take full command and full responsibility."

Within a few weeks Stranleigh found himself the owner of nearly a hundred coast-guard stations. Leaving Blake in charge of Lannacombe, the young nobleman departed aboard his yacht. Some ten days previously the tents had been erected, partly to learn whether they would stand the heavy winds frequenting that section of the coast even in summer, and partly to discover whether any inquiry would be made regarding them; but so far the white village attracted no attention. Stranleigh picked up his men at Hamburg, Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Cherbourg, and steamed leisurely across the Channel, favoured in his design by a peaceful summer calm.

Guided by the Start light, the yacht cast anchor off Lannacombe Cove, a manœuvre which the captain had tried several times from his base in Salcombe Harbour. The men landed without mishap or molestation, and were conducted to their tents, while the

yacht stood out to sea and entered the Salcombe Estuary in daylight.

The invaders, amply provided with money, were sent to their various coast-guard stations in batches of about half a dozen, marching to different railway stations, thus to attract as little attention as possible. Week by week their reports came in, written in French, German, or Dutch. On an average there were three men of the same nationality at each station, and they had all been warned that continous pay and avoidance of trouble lay in keeping their mouths shut. Being naval and military men, well disciplined, this injunction was strictly obeyed.

At the end of a couple of months, Stranleigh gave them all leave of absence on full pay, they to make their way home by Southampton and Harwich, each to report in his own handwriting when he arrived. Once they were safely out of the way, the following letter to the British Government was dictated by Stranleigh, who said to Blake with a smile, before he began—

"You have never appreciated my craftiness in selecting Germans, Dutchmen, Belgians, and Frenchmen for this enterprise. If the Government intends to make a fuss, it may find itself involved in an international complication. Now, take this down carefully—

"Earl Stranleigh of Wychwood begs to inform His Majesty's Government that early in the summer he purchased from it such abandoned coast-guard stations as the Government wished to dispose of. For two months these stations have been occupied by Germans, Dutchmen, Belgians, and Frenchmen, whose reports, in their various languages, Earl Stranleigh encloses for the information of the authorities. The men sailed from various Continental ports in Earl Stranleigh's yacht, and were landed without hindrance upon the coast of England. They were all naval and military men, and two hundred of them lived for a week under military discipline in a camp of tents, on British soil. They travelled through England to their various stations, and have now returned to their respective homes by the ordinary routes. So far as Lord Stranleigh is aware, no inquiry has been made and no questions asked.

"(*Signed*) STRANLEIGH OF WYCHWOOD."

Two weeks passed without any answer to this letter; then arrived a long blue envelope, decorated by the capital letters "O.H.M.S." Stranleigh tore it open and read—

"Earl Stranleigh of Wychwood.

"My Lord,

"The Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Blue desires me to thank your lordship for the communication sent to him.

"Yours, JOHN HOBSON, *Secretary*."

"Pigeon-holed, by Jingo!" ejaculated Stranleigh, throwing down the paper for Blake's inspection.

Blake read and laughed.

"Good old British Government! The villain is foiled again."

"But the villain still pursues her," cried his lordship. "I shall now qualify for prison with an effectiveness that cannot be ignored."

A further complete episode in the eventful career of Lord Stranleigh, Philanthropist, will appear in the next Number.

SPRING.

THE glory of the Spring is in your eyes—
Splendour of opening blossom, budding trees,
Gold of the sunlight, radiance of the skies.
Your eyes meet mine—I understand all these.

The sweetness of the Spring is in your voice—
Murmur of balmy breeze and rippling stream,
Songs of the birds whose message is "Rejoice!"
You speak to me, and winter is a dream.

The tenderness of Spring is in your hand—
Flowers that unfold above the bare, brown earth,
A world new-made—new life breathed o'er the land.
You touch me, and I see the magic birth.

L. G. MOBERLY.

POOR SPORT.

By MICHAEL MORIARTY.

CULLEN had come back a week after term began, owing to some slight illness, and he was at present busily unpacking his boxes. His room, a small one at best, was in a state of uncomfortable chaos, for his luggage took up considerable space, and various articles of wearing apparel were strewn over floor and bed. Consequently he was rather disgusted when his door was flung open, and fat, chubby little Kegan staggered in almost convulsed with laughter.

"Hang it all, Tummy, mind my clothes! And why can't you shut the door after you?"

But "Tummy" Kegan merely cast himself on the bed and rolled about in an agony of merriment.

Cullen, after one or two futile attempts to learn the joke, went to close the door just as three others, also in more or less violent paroxysms, rushed in and proceeded to spread themselves over his room. So he recognised the inevitable and lit a cigarette.

"When you fellows have quite finished," he said coldly, "perhaps you will take your feet off my clothes and tell me the joke."

Before long they sobered down, through sheer weakness, and by degrees he learnt the story.

"Oh, he is an absolute ass!" panted Kegan.

"Yes," agreed Cullen, looking round the room, "but which of them do you mean?"

"Place, a new man."

And again they all doubled up.

"You see," began Sam Grainger, the American, in a weak voice, "I told him that Shane had some beastly illness, and was liable to fits and things, but was afraid to let anyone know. That began it. He swallowed every word I said, so naturally I went a bit further. I gave him some ghastly details—told him with bated breath that Shane had a horpuscuple, and all sorts of things."

"What on earth is a horpuscuple?" asked Cullen, grinning broadly.

"Shucks, I can't tell you! My brilliant imagination coined the word, so far as I know."

"Well, what happened?"

Kegan sat up suddenly, and his fat face beamed with pleasure as he spoke rapidly.

"Then Shane had an epileptic fit—you know, soap lathered over his face with a shaving-brush. He's gone into Place's room, and is going to have one now. We told Place to come and call us if anything went wrong. He'll be here soon, and then the fun will begin."

For a minute everyone spoke at once, each trying to give further details. Then the door burst open, and a thin, anæmic youth, with a somewhat pimply face and starting eyes, thrust in his head.

"Quick, you chaps," he gasped—"Shane is ill again!"

Scarcely attempting to conceal their laughter, everyone hurried after him and rushed into his room, where a short, smug-faced youth was lying on the bed, twitching horribly and apparently foaming at the mouth.

"Poor chap!" said Sam Grainger in a whisper. "Awful, isn't it? I'm afraid he's going to get violent. Better try and soothe him, Place."

Place, who evidently did not lack self-confidence, advanced to the bed and bent over its occupant.

"How are you, Shane?" he inquired kindly. "Feeling better?"

"Go to blazes!" replied Shane, quite unemotionally.

But Place was not to be deterred. He put his hand on the sufferer's forehead and attempted to resume the process of soothing.

"Poor old chap——" he began gently, but got no further. Shane kicked out heartily and jumped to his feet, swearing and waving his arms. Immediately there was a crowd round him, trying to hold him down. In the commotion that ensued, Grainger—who weighed some thirteen stone—managed to tread on Place's foot, and a youth called Ramsay, who fancied himself as a boxer, landed what he called the "Fitzsimmons half-arm jolt" on his ribs. Finally order was restored, Shane

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sank on to the bed exhausted, and Place was told off to get some brandy from the butler.

Shane smiled complacently.

"Mind you," he said, "I have first go at the brandy, and you chaps can have what I leave. After that I'll recover, apologise to the idiot, and clear out. Whist!"

The dishevelled Place entered hastily with a stiff glass of brandy and water.

"Here, Shane," he said coaxingly, "try and drink a little of this; it will buck you up."

The invalid, with more energy than was quite consistent with his part, began to gulp it down, when Grainger interfered and dexterously took the glass from him.

"Better not let him drink too much," he explained to Place, and then retired into a corner. Unfortunately, the others, in their eagerness to prevent a similar excess on his part, managed to upset the glass and its contents. After that there was nothing for them to do but to retire and leave the charitable and unsuspecting Place to tidy his room as best he could.

Quite trivial events often bring about great results. For instance, if Cullen had not been ill, he probably would not have waded through piles of magazine articles, for he was by no means a great reader. But so it was ordained, and his reading gave him a brilliant idea. After supper that evening he laid it before his friends, and was voted a genius. They sat up till "lights out" discussing and perfecting their plans.

Three days later—it was Saturday, and so a half-holiday—Grainger quietly entered Place's room, and for a few moments watched him practising putting on the floor. Place was voluble, but Grainger spoke little; he seemed solemn and preoccupied. Then Shane came in and stood beside him. They both watched Place gravely, and occasionally exchanged inaudible remarks, until at last, appearing to realise that something was wrong, he paused and looked at them in vacant bewilderment.

"What on earth is up with you two?" he inquired uneasily.

Grainger turned away with a sound meant to resemble a sob, and wiped his eyes with obvious furtiveness, while real tears appeared in Shane's eyes.

"Don't you know?" asked the latter brokenly.

"No, what on earth is it?" Place was obviously nervous.

Shane wrung his hand and patted him on the shoulder.

"It is better so," he said. "Come!"

The three of them left the room quietly. There were several fellows in the gallery outside, also strangely silent and solemn. Place looked very uncomfortable, but seemed afraid to ask any questions. When he got to Shane's room, however, he experienced an unpleasant shock. The blinds were down and thick curtains were drawn across the window; a couple of candles alone lighted the room, and it was some few seconds before he realised that the black-draped table in the centre bore a coffin. He turned towards Shane, nervously suspicious.

"What's all this for?"

"Sit down and I'll tell you, old chap."

He dropped into an easy-chair, and almost before he realised what was happening, found himself blindfolded, gagged, and bound. He made one or two efforts to break loose, but found it quite useless. Then they lifted him into the coffin, and, unable to move a muscle, he heard the lid being screwed down.

As soon as this was accomplished, the blinds were drawn up, and daylight poured into the room to disclose half a dozen or more grinning and delighted faces. They examined the air-holes to make sure that they were not blocked up in any way, and then, singing some sort of mournful dirge, lifted the coffin on to their shoulders and carried it away. The place they had chosen for the "interment" was at the back of the college stables, where there was a disused saw-pit to serve as the grave. Lowering the coffin into it, they began to pitch earth and stones on top, one of them keeping the air-holes free. Then they retired to discuss matters.

The question arose as to how long he was to be left there.

"Well, Cullen," said Grainger, smiling in order to hide any qualms of conscience he might feel, "you suggested this dodge, so it is for you to decide how long we shall let him remain in Hades."

"One moment," grunted Cullen absently. He was sitting on the table reading a magazine, and apparently in search of some particular paragraph. After a few moments' silence, he looked up, and, when he spoke, there was a curious tremor in his voice.

"Look here, you chaps, I think we had better get him out again as soon as possible. This joke was played at an American college once, and"—he looked round the room nervously and paused—"when they took the victim out, he was absolutely mad."

"No fooling, Cullen?" asked Grainger half doubtfully.

"Read it yourself, my dear man. It seems to me"—he broke off suddenly, and then added after a pause—"you know, Place is not exactly a strong-minded man at the best of times. I think I should kill myself if anything goes wrong in this affair."

There was a short but rather ghastly silence. Then they all raced down the galleries and out to the stables. Kegan jumped down into the pit and hammered with his fists on the lid of the coffin.

"It's all right, Place," he cried; "it's all a—a joke!"

There was a grim irony in his words, but nobody noticed it.

"Come on," said Grainger impatiently—"throw up the ropes!"

They carried the coffin speedily into Shane's room. The black cloth was still on the table, but one of them tore it off and hurled it savagely away. In a few seconds they had unscrewed the lid of the coffin, and were crowding round to gaze with forced smiles at its occupant. The bound figure lay there motionless.

"Place! Place, old chap!"

There was no movement, and Grainger bent over him to feel his heart. After a few long moments he stood upright.

"It's all right," he said; and those around him gave a sigh of relief, for they had all feared more than they dared to suggest. They cut the cords that bound him, removed the gag and handkerchief over his eyes, and carried him to an arm-chair. He sat in it listlessly, his mouth open, staring vacantly in front of him. Cullen gave a choking cry and rushed from the room. The others shrank away and gazed at Place from their corner. Suddenly he turned full towards them and looked into the eyes of each in turn, and then, his eyes still vacant and staring, and his face almost as unemotional as if it were a mask, he began to laugh—such a laugh! There was no mirth in it. Sometimes it seemed as though he was sobbing, sometimes moaning, and to the five that heard it there was something fearfully and almost diabolically cynical in it. At last, with a muttered curse, Grainger resolutely strode up to him, and, catching him by the lapel of his coat, looked into his eyes.

"Place!" he said sharply and authoritatively. "Place!"—shaking him roughly. "Place, do you hear me? Look at me, Place! Don't you know me—Grainger? I'm Grainger!"

Place stopped laughing, and for a few seconds it seemed as though he would come round. But suddenly he burst away and strode up and down the room, shouting and laughing hysterically. Sometimes he would pause and hum the dirge-like tune they had sung as they carried him down in the coffin; at others he would stand still and mumble incoherently.

The others watched him, gloomy and fearful, and spoke seldom. Visions of expulsion and the law-courts came before them. Then Kegan got up from his chair, and said to the company in general, in a dull, helpless voice: "It's no good, you chaps. It is bound to get to the governor this evening, and I can't stand the suspense any longer. I'm off to tell him. Anyone come with me?"

He made a movement towards the door, and was about to open it, when Cullen entered, and everybody looked at him in tense silence.

"It's all up," he said; "'Bugs' is coming!"

Everyone stood aghast. At such a time the devil would have been a vastly more welcome visitor, for "Bugs"—officially known as the Reverend Charles Keating—was one of the professors. They heard his heavy step in the gallery without, and then his cheery voice asking for permission to enter.

"Come in, sir!" Cullen called out. "We are just going to have some tea. Will you join us?"

"Certainly I will—certainly."

There was a broad smile on his face as his eye roved round the company.

"It is a curious thing—in fact, it is quite providential"—he dropped into an easy-chair and stretched his feet towards the fire—"that you particular fellows should be gathered together in this room, because, before I eat your salt, I have some remarks to make.

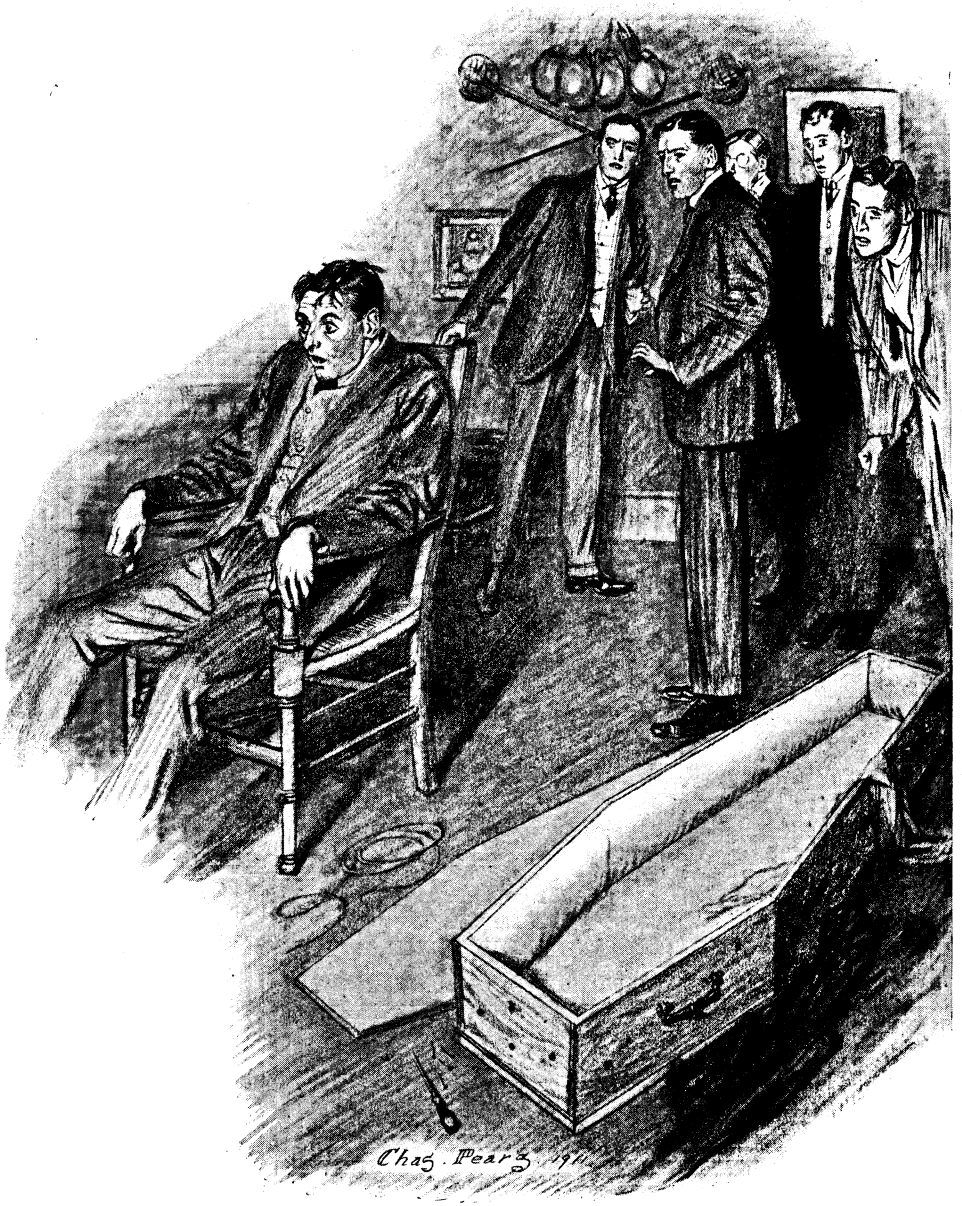
"Would you be surprised to hear," he continued, his twinkling eyes wandering from face to face, "that a party of you disturbed the whole college this afternoon—just at the time, too, when some of us were taking a well-deserved nap? No, of course you know nothing about it. But, for all that, you will, each one of you—Grainger, Shane, Ramsay, Cullen, Hope, and Kegan—find yourselves down for a double fine to-morrow. There, you blackguards, the magistrate has done his duty, and will now so far condescend as to drink tea with the condemned."

Even at the time they noticed that there was a ghastly humour about the affair. What did a mere "double fine" matter under the circumstances? They forced themselves to smile at his joke.

At this moment a low laugh came from behind Ramsay, and Mr. Keating sat forward in his chair to see who was there.

"Ah, Place!" he said. Then he wagged his head solemnly. "Place, you are in very bad company. Am I to put your name on the black list, too? Had you anything to do with this afternoon's performance?"

Kegan plumped down into a chair and swore quite distinctly, Grainger kicked the coal-scuttle viciously, and another began to



"He sat in it listlessly, his mouth open, staring vacantly."

whistle. Everyone realised that the music was going to begin with a vengeance. But Cullen saved the situation. He turned on the Professor with a merry laugh.

"Look here, sir, you know quite well that that is not a fair question. If Place was not reported to you, there is no more to be said."

"Quite right," laughed Mr. Keating; "you chaps are getting much too sharp. Well, the official part of the business is over, so supposing somebody tells the story just to keep us going till the kettle boils."

"I think," said Cullen, "that as Place took a somewhat original part in the proceedings, he should be the one to tell the tale."

"Yes," cried Place, jumping to his feet and taking up a position on the hearth-rug, with his back to the fire—"yes, Mr. Keating, you listen to me, and I'll tell you the story of a most amusing afternoon."

"For Heaven's sake, sit down, you fool!" shouted Grainger; but Place waved him aside.

"Sit down yourself, old chap," he said, smiling. "The joke is over now; I am no longer mad. Don't you think I did it pretty well? Got some of my own back, eh, Shane? Feeling ill, Kegan? You look quite unpleasantly pale. Good old Grainger! You nearly made me chuck it."

"Yes, yes," interjected the Professor, grinning with amiable expectancy, "but you haven't yet let me into the joke."

"Well, sir, *I'll* tell you." Cullen brandished a loaf of bread and a butter-knife as he spoke, for he had been busying himself preparing tea throughout the foregoing conversation. "We agreed to bury Place alive. Cheery idea, wasn't it? I got the tip from an American magazine, only at the time I forgot that the victim in one case went raving mad. It was Place who brought that fact back to my mind. I happened to go into his room last night, and found him reading the identical article, and, what is more, he insisted on discussing it with me—said what a beastly trick it was, and all that. So then, of course, I saw it would be no use playing the joke on him; none of us could have any fun because, even if we got him into the coffin at all, he would only tell us it was a stale joke when he came out. At the same time, I did not want to disappoint these chaps, so I hit upon the ingenious idea that has been enacted this afternoon. Place was buried; Grainger, Shane and Co. got plenty of fun out of that. Then Place came out and feigned madness; he and I got plenty of fun there. Yes, Kegan, my dear, I had my ear to the keyhole all the time."

The others went for him of one accord, and if the Reverend "Bugs" had been less amused, he might have been shocked at some of the language that he heard. But they were too relieved to be angry, and that tea-party, after the anxieties of the afternoon, was marked by almost hysterical high spirits.

Even Place for a short half-hour was treated as an equal, but it is regrettable to have to add that, before the evening was over, they were again making plans for his discomfiture. And the fact that he had given them a very bad afternoon did not make them any more lenient towards him, for he was a very grievous ass.

MAY.

A Triolet.

COME out, sweetheart, come out with me!
The throstles pipe, and it is May;
A green delight is every tree;
Come out, sweetheart, come out with me!
The cowslip blossoms on the lea,
The wind and cloudlets are at play;
Come out, sweetheart, come out with me!
The throstles pipe, and it is May.

ELIZABETH B. PIERCY.

LIGHT AS A PRESERVATIVE OF HEALTH.

BY SIR JAMES CRICHTON-BROWNE, M.D., LL.D., F.R.S.

IN a general way, it is recognised that light has everywhere intimate relations with protoplasm, and in the case of plants the *rôle* played by sunlight in their metabolism has been accurately defined. We know that in all green plants—that is to say, in plants containing chlorophyll, which may be likened to their blood—exposure to sunlight is essential in order that they may construct organic substances from the material of their food. When that is supplied to them, they appropriate its radiant energy, absorb carbon dioxide and give off oxygen, assimilate food, increase in weight, exhibit growth, and manifest augmented functional activity generally. When that is withheld from them, they cannot form chlorophyll, their exhalation of carbon dioxide diminishes, they fail to make substantial growth, but put forth long slender shoots, they become etiolated, or of a pale yellow or whitish colour, deteriorate generally in habits and structure, and in a longer or shorter time dwindle and die.

There can be no doubt that light, and more particularly those rays that are found at the junction of the orange and red in the solar spectrum, exercise a potent influence upon the tissue changes of all green plants, that they are necessary not only for the first formation of chlorophyll, but also for its maintenance during the whole life of the organs in which it exists, and that they also indirectly affect the absorption of mineral matters by the roots.

There can be no doubt, further, that there is a relation between the intensity of light and the decomposition of carbon dioxide in plants, for that process slackens when light is feeble, and is most active when it is at its optimum of brightness. The whole vegetable world, as we know it, is dependent on light for its being, and can only flourish when and where light is plentiful.

As regards animals, their functional relations with light are not so clearly marked out. Many of them practically live in darkness, to which they become specially adapted, but an enormous preponderance of them sport in the sunbeams, and to them those sunbeams have become essential conditions of health and vigour.

In the sea, as well as on land, the dependence on light is broadly exhibited. "The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean" may bear many "a gem of purest ray serene," but their flora and fauna are scanty. There is probably an abundance of life at all depths, but the number of individuals and species diminishes as the depth increases and the light diminishes, and at very great depths artificial light is in vogue.

Phosphorescence plays an important part in deep-sea life, and is correlated with the prevailing red and brown tints in deep-sea organisms, and even searchlights are in use, for some species, in addition to large eyes, are provided with a sort of bull's-eye lantern, from which streams of light are thrown out at the will of the animal.

The want of light in very deep water produces inversion of the phenomenon of the fixation of carbon and separation of oxygen in terrestrial plants. Diurnal land animals do not thrive in darkness, and human beings immured in it for any length of time lose weight and strength, and become pale and blanched like an etiolated plant. We have only to contrast the people who are in "populous city pent," dwelling in narrow streets, in dingy courts, in tenebrous tenements or Cimmerian cellars, and working in dusky shops and factories, with those who labour in the fields under the vault of the blue sky, and shelter in cottages or in hovels, it may be, but open to the weather, bathed in all the sunshine that our climate affords, in order to realise that light is salutary and darkness deleterious.

Of course, numerous factors contribute to the physical differences which distinguish indoor town from outdoor country workers, and it is not easy to disentangle the influence of defective illumination from that of stagnant air, foul emanations, disease germs, overcrowding, and evil living, in the one case, and the influence of adequate illumination from that of pure air, active exercise,

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wholesome food, and tranquil ways, in the other.

Yet, on the large scale, it cannot be gainsaid that sunlight is an important member of that confederacy of outward influences that makes for physiological righteousness.

We have an indication of its activity in this direction in the bronzing of the skin it induces. Pigmentation of the skin, to which bronzing is due, may be caused by low temperatures as well as by sunlight, but when of sunlight origin, it is a sign of vital energy, and, indeed, the capability of cutaneous pigment formation is to some extent a measure of constitutional strength.

The absence of pigment is often associated with weakness. Albinos are invariably feeble creatures, and in the case of the cat are often deaf, and in that of the horse short-sighted; and stock-breeders have a strong prejudice against pure white animals, alleging that they are delicate and difficult to rear.

Then the production of pigment in human beings of the white race requires a certain substratum of stamina, for healthy people bronze easily, and sick people only with difficulty and slightly. Chlorotic and tubercular subjects, indeed, may be freely exposed to the brightest sunshine and retain their pale complexions, and in consumptives, under the open-air treatment, the appearance of bronzing is sometimes the first signal of returning health.

But sunlight penetrates much deeper than the skin. It quickens the circulation, it increases the oxidation in the body, it enriches the blood, it promotes nutrition in every organ and tissue.

But how, it may be asked, does light do all this, seeing that in man and the higher animals its access to the body is so limited? We could understand its widespread sway, it may be said, if the whole surface of the diaphanous skin were habitually exposed to it, so that the corpuscles of the circulating blood, like the corpuscles of chlorophyll in plants, might drink its kinetic energy, and the cutaneous nerve endings be stimulated by it.

But, as a matter of fact, man and the higher animals practically live in darkness. They spend at least a third of their time under the shades of night, they hide themselves in the murkiness of dens and houses, and they are covered with fur, wool, hair, or clothing, so that light cannot reach the skin at all, or only in feeble dilution. In men—even in those of us who are bald and do not wear gloves—only about one-eighth part of the surface of the body is directly exposed to the influences of light.

The answer to that is that, in the higher animals, the whole history of evolution consists in the gathering up into special channels of functions that were at one time generally diffused. Touch and the sense of pain and of temperature are still maintained over the whole periphery, although even they concentrate themselves in specialised cutaneous regions; but taste and smell have been focussed on certain tracts of mucous membrane, and hearing has had constructed for it a mechanism of the most exquisite contrivance.

The vibrations of sound—caused, say, by the voice of a speaker—still throw the whole body into a state of tremor; but they are perceived, not through the feeling of general sensibility, but through the ear and auditory nerve. And so the undulations—or shall I say the corpuscles?—of light, which in plants and lower creatures exercise whatever effects they may possess upon the organism through its whole superfices, in the higher animals and men, operate upon it through the retina of the eye and its brain field.

And not only have these generally diffused superficial impressions, which were the rudiments of vision, been lifted into the eye and raised to an immeasurably higher power, but with them have gone up in great measure the nutritive prerogatives of light. These are exercised no longer directly upon million multitudes of cells, but reflexly through an autocratic and unifying brain-centre. The light impinging upon the retina, stimulating the nerve endings of the optic nerve, and initiating impulses which are conveyed to the brain, not only sets up sensations and visual judgments, but has a secondary trophic or nutritive effect.

Its influence is not confined to the visual area in the occipital lobes and angular gyrus of the brain, nor to other sensory and motor areas welded to them, but extends to some nutritive centre that regulates the building up and breaking down of protoplasms and the contraction and dilatation of blood-vessels in remote regions and parts.

You must not imagine that the light gets no further than your eye and brain. It goes all over you, in spite of your clothes, and insinuates itself into every nook and cranny of your body. It is not easy to give you demonstrative proof of this in your own person, but that may be afforded in the case of some animals.

And, in this connection, the amphibia

supply us with instructive material, for in them we can trace out the direct and reflex action of light co-existing side by side very obviously. They have naked and sensitive skins, and they have complex and sensitive eyes, and they have, moreover, movable pigments in their skins which respond to light, giving rise to changes in colour.

These pigments, black, red, yellow, or green, are contained in cells called chromatophores placed immediately beneath the transparent epidermis, which can contract, withdrawing the pigment from the surface and making it look pale, or dilate, spreading the pigment near the surface and giving it a darker or more saturated tint.

By the movements of these chromatophores, in conjunction with a fixed white pigment, and with interference of light by structure, producing blue and violet colours, these creatures, and especially the chameleons and tree frogs, appear in many varied and beautiful liveries, which are changed in accordance with environment and disposition.

The paramount object of these varied liveries is concealment; so the animal assumes a pattern akin to its surroundings. What has been called natural photography goes on. The frog that sits on the grass grows green, the frog located on granitic soil becomes speckled, the frog haunting the dark moorland dons a brown costume.

These changes, which are slowly established, are attributable to the influence of light and colour playing directly upon the skin; but other rapid changes, as Lord Lister long ago proved, are produced not by the direct action of light on the skin, but indirectly by its action on the optic nerve and retina.

A dark-coloured frog, that invariably becomes pale when exposed to light with its eyes uncovered, retains its dark colour when so exposed after a little hood of dark cloth had been placed over its eyes, without interfering with respiration, and instantly becomes pale when the hood is removed, its quick change being unmistakably due to retinal and not to cutaneous stimulus.

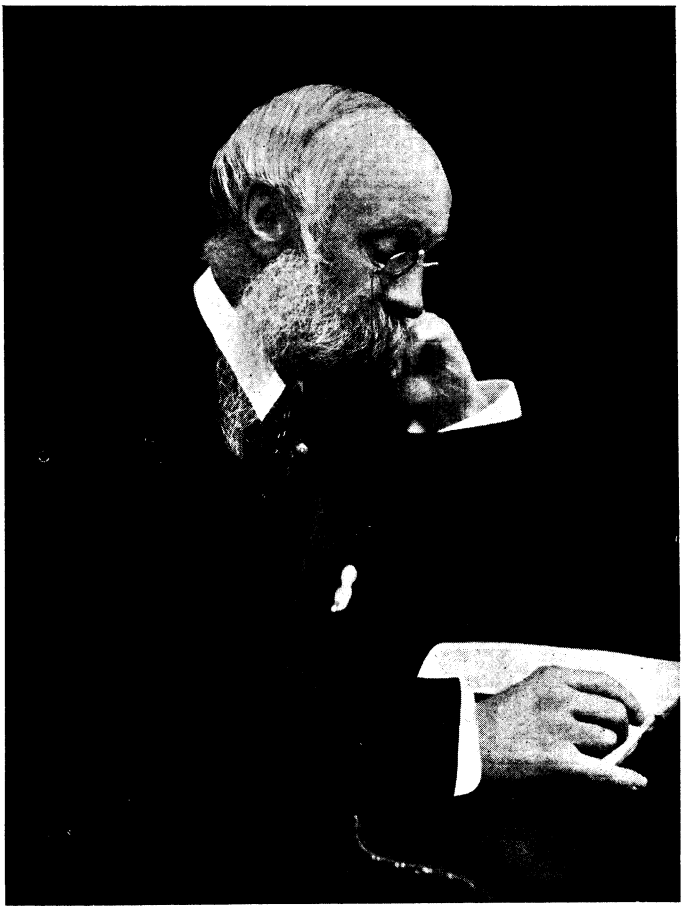


Photo by] *[The Dover Street Studios.*

SIR JAMES CRICHTON-BROWNE, M.D., LL.D., F.R.S.

Desirous of ascertaining through what efferent channels the nervous impulse that caused concentration of the pigment on exposure to light was conveyed from the brain to the foot, Lord Lister divided the sciatic nerve—the great nerve of the hind limb, but without effect on the colour of the limb. He tried then division of all the structures in the thigh, except the bone, femoral artery, and sciatic nerve, but again without effect.

When, however, he added to the latter procedure a section of the sciatic nerve, the

animal, being then pale, gradually grew dark below the seat of operation, till in no long time the leg presented the appearance of having had a black stocking drawn over it, while the body and other limbs continued pale. All these parts were equally exposed to sunlight, but the darkened leg was cut off from reflex influence from the retina, which was still operative upon the body and other limbs, and so its chromatophores dilated and put forth branches.

It thus became clear that the regulation of this function of pigment distribution in the frog, which is probably closely allied to the action of the cells in nutrition, is not carried on by special nerves, as in the case of the contraction of ordinary muscles, but that all the nerves going to the limb have trophic functions. The changes that take place in the chromatophorus cells of the skin of the amphibia under the influence of light—namely, contraction with drawings in of their fine ramifications and concentration of pigment—remind us of the changes that, according to some recent observers, take place in the neurons or cells of the brain in the transition from the sleeping to the waking state, when their branching processes and terminal buds are said to be retracted; and, of course, of all external stimuli, light is the one that is most potent and universal in determining that transition.

It seems curious that nervous action should make the pigment molecules move rapidly to the centre of the cell from its extreme ramifications, and yet this is not, as Lord Lister points out, more wonderful than a sudden gush of tears or outburst of perspiration under nervous influence, and both of these phenomena may be induced by excessive stimulation of the retina by light. Platen has shown that rabbits give off much more carbon dioxide when exposed to sunlight than when kept in the dark; but when the animal is blindfolded, the excretion of carbon dioxide under these two conditions is equalised.

I have said that in human beings the direct influence of light on the skin is not altogether abrogated. The races that still go about "in native worth and honour clad," no doubt, benefit by that influence, but civilised races that have addicted themselves to raiment have been content to forego it. But in them, too, under certain circumstances, the exposure of the whole surface to light seems to have a tonic effect.

At Veldes, in Carinthia, in Austria, a special sunlight cure is carried on. The whole body, uncovered, is exposed to the influence of the sun and air for several hours a day, and the patients walk about in the park as lightly clad as in a Turkish bath.

It would be difficult to say how much of the beneficial effects of the treatment at Veldes is due to sunlight, how much to pure air, regular habits, and a quiet and secluded life. But beneficial results are obtained in cases of blood poverty and nervous prostration, and the doctors and patients alike believe that, in securing these, the sunlight is at least an important adjuvant.

Sir Lauder Brunton saw at the Roosevelt Hospital, at New York, a room, three sides of which were glass, so that it was flooded with light; and he was informed that this was used as a sun-bath, and that convalescents recovering from illness and operations who were turned into it naked, and allowed to bask in the sun's rays, seemed to regain flesh and strength more rapidly than others not so treated.

In certain states of exhaustion and reduced nutrition, there arises a craving for sunlight, and in the grounds of any asylum, in summer-time, you may see chronic lunatics complacently basking in what would be a distressing and broiling glare to ordinarily constituted persons. That it is not altogether the heat rays that attract them is indicated by the fact that these same lunatics do not hang round the fireplaces within the building.

But the surviving direct influence of light on the skin generally in man is comparatively unimportant, I believe, in comparison with its reflex influence through the eye; and that reflex influence has not yet, it seems to me, received the attention it deserves. We are apt to think that the eye is for seeing only, and to ignore its subordinate functions, but one of these subordinate functions is, I suggest, its transmuting light into a trophic stimulus to the system generally.

Light, operating through the eye, brain, and spinal cord, is, I maintain, a universal tonic, promoting health and nutrition, and so increasing resistance to disease.

The blind are almost invariably feeble, anæmic, and prone to illness. No doubt other concomitants of their affliction are partly responsible for their debility, but the deprivation of trophic influence which their sightlessness involves is, I believe, its chief cause.

In the open-air treatment of tuberculosis, which is now yielding such excellent results, light is a powerful accessory; and it is so, I believe, not by any lethal action on the

bacilli—which, lodged in the body, it cannot reach, and which, when expectorated, are more expeditiously and efficiently destroyed by other germicides—but by its trophic influence on the lungs through the vagi nerves, thereby increasing pulmonary resistance to bacillary invasion.

Division of the vagi in an animal is, we know, rapidly followed by pneumonia and gangrene of the lungs, owing to section of the trophic fibres, and it seems indubitable that any diminution of trophic influence through these nerves will lower the vital resistance of the pulmonary tissues, and that a full and free flow of trophic influence will brace them in their struggle with disease.

That full, free flow of trophic influence through the vagi to the lungs is, I am satisfied, greatly reinforced by the copious admission of light to the eye, and the fact that improvement under the open-air treatment is often more marked in winter than in summer does not militate against this conclusion.

From all that has been said, it surely follows that light is instrumental in preserving health and in maintaining it at a high standard, by its immediate effects on the individual man, psychical and trophical, as well as by its action in safeguarding him from microbic attacks. And it surely follows, from what has been said, that light is a sanitary agent of the first order, and that it behoves all good sanitarians to spread the light, to conserve the light, and to protect it from pollution.

DUSK.

THE pointed fir trees cut the primrose sky,
The light fades every minute,
A night breeze lifts the boughs and hastens by,
A brown bat circling in it.

From level water-meadows far away
A plaintive plover quavers,
Where, shrouding tenderly the dying day,
A grey mist sinks and wavers.

High overhead pale points begin to show—
Now two, now five, now seven—
And as the dusk blots out the world below,
They light the lamps in Heaven.

JESSIE POPE.

MAY MORNING.

By A. L. HARRIS.

"WHERE are you going to, my pretty maid?"

Hebe started. It was very early in the morning, and she had reckoned on having the world to herself for a while.

"You!" she exclaimed in that tone of voice which reduces you from a personality to a pronoun. "Who would ever have thought——"

"Exactly," I interrupted. "But here I am, drawn from my downy couch—which is a spring mattress, and so all the more appropriate to the time of year—for, I imagine, the same purpose as yourself."

"Ridiculous!" exclaimed Hebe. "That is, I mean, I don't believe it. The idea of a man——"

"Of a mere man," I cut in, "rising with the lark, or, rather, *for* a lark, on the first of May, for the purpose of bathing——"

"I'm not," interrupted Hebe, turning pink as far as the top of her Peter Pan collar. "I mean, I wasn't. How silly you are!"

And she stamped her foot with such force that I felt sure several blades of grass must have been damaged for life. All this time we were standing at the gate—Hebe's gate—where I had met her so unexpectedly and opportunely after having spent the best part of an hour lurking behind the quickset hedge.

"There's nothing comes up to it," I went on gravely. "As a face wash, it beats all the most expensive Bond Street preparations hollow. I fancied my complexion wasn't looking quite up to the mark lately, and so I thought I'd have a go at the good, old-fashioned, nothing-to-pay-first-of-May cosmetic which was so in favour with our great-great-great-grandmothers."

"It was only for the fun of the thing," began Hebe in a self-exculpatory tone. "Of course, I never really thought——"

"Of course not," I broke in. "What do milk and roses want with May dew?"

Hebe dimpled. "Well, come along," she said. "Let's go down to the big meadow."

We crossed the road, turned down a lane, and I helped Hebe over a stile, not an unduly lofty stile, and one which Hebe, when alone, hopped over like a bird, but I made the most of it.

"Pray—*pray* be careful!" I urged. "I knew a girl once who sprained her ankle so that she limped for life by recklessly jumping from the top bar of a stile which might have been the twin brother of this."

"Pooh!" said Hebe. "There's no need to fuss. What a funny lot of people you seem to know!"

I was a little hurt by her tone, but it was May Morning—May Morning, and I had Hebe all to myself. The sun was shining, and the birds were practising all sorts of new trills and shakes in honour of the occasion. Altogether, it was the sort of day to make one want to pat the universe on the back and say: "Good old world!"

"I'll race you to the next gate," said Hebe, and she started off down the foot-path.

It was such a joy to watch her skimming along like a white serge swallow, that she won easily. Arrived at the gate, she turned round in triumph.

"You—you snail!" she exclaimed. "I believe you're growing old and fat at twenty-five!" Then: "Oh, look at my dress! All wet and green and dabbly with that horrid dew! Isn't it *too* bad?"—holding up a portion of the white serge skirt. "And it only came from the cleaner's yesterday! That's three-and-sixpence clean thrown away!"

"Awfully rough!" I murmured sympathetically. "What a pity it is you can't turn up the bottoms of your frocks as we men do our——"

"I don't see," interrupted Hebe, "how anything that ruins a frock can be good for the complexion. But I got up early on purpose, and so I may as well——"

Bending down, she flicked a gossamer-like wisp of lawn over the sward until she judged it sufficiently saturated, and then applied it to her face.

"Do you see any improvement?" she asked.

"There was no room for any," I replied, with an eye to the dimples. "All the same——"

"Moo-o!"

Hebe shrieked and clutched me, and, turning, we confronted a red cow which had suddenly materialised, and was gazing at us over the gate leading to the next field. There was something almost embarrassing in its expression of calm, stolid curiosity.

"Human beings," it seemed to ask, "what are you doing in my fields at this hour, without so much as a three-legged stool or a milking-pail to account for your intrusion?"

"I think," said Hebe, "I had better go back. I believe my feet are wet, as well as my skirt. And I hate being stared at by cows!"

So we turned. The path was narrow, but, by keeping very close together, it was possible



"'Moo-o!'"

to walk side by side and yet keep off the grass. I hardly know how it happened, but, before we had gone many yards, I found myself holding Hebe's hand.

Looking back over her shoulder, she informed me that the cow was still looking. Whereupon I felt it advisable to put my arm round her waist, just out of bravado, and also because it was May Morning, and the world and we were young together.

"Moo-o!" bellowed the red cow, like a bovine Mrs. Grundy.

"Mind your own business!" I shouted back.

Hebe laughed, and the sun, which had been hiding behind a cloud suggestive of a motor-veil, peeped out at the sound, and the birds sang louder than ever, and a church clock somewhere in the distance struck seven, and then—and then I kissed her. And as all she said was "Don't!" I did it again.

"Moo-o!" came the voice of Mrs. Grundy for the third time.

Somehow, it was striking eight before we found ourselves back at the gate, having tried several other brands of warranted, genuine May dew *en route*.

Hebe's youngest brother—a detestable young cub—was swinging on the gate.

He bestowed a wide-open, uncomplimentary, fraternal stare on Hebe.

"How queer your face looks," he said—"all green and streaky!"

Then he looked at me.

"So's yours!" he said.

THE HOUR OF LIFE.

LIFE holds all hours, but one hour holds all life.
All roads lead thither—hill-tracks bathed in dew,
Wheat-field and wood-lane, starred with gold loosestrife,
The crowded street or ilex avenue.

All grief, all joy, all bitter and all sweet,
Sleep in the circle of that narrow span.
Blind all we enter, and in one heart-beat
Know all the heart's desire can show to man.

All roads lead thence. We pass upon our way
Through silence or, maybe, the world's loud strife;
Grief, joy, loss, comes as day still follows day,
But of life's hours but one hour holds all life.

UNA ARTEVELDE TAYLOR.

CODEX E.

By ARCHIBALD MARSHALL,

Author of "Peter Binney, Undergraduate," "Exton Manor," "Many Junes," etc.



THINK, if I were to possess Sayes Court, the chief seat of my friend and one-time pupil, Lord Talbot of Sayes, and, let us say, a tenth part of his preposterous income to keep it up with, I should want nothing more on earth. The happiest years of my life were spent in that gracious house, set down in the midst of a country so lovely and remote that time seemed to stand still there, and all life to be spent in a mellow afternoon. But without the clever, gentle, retiring boy who was my constant companion during the five years I lived there, or the man he has since become, the place would lose—to me, at least—half its charm; and, after all, rather than possess Sayes Court without him, I would prefer to keep it as a house to which I am at all times made welcome, and which grows more beautiful in memory every time I return from visiting it.

To snatch a week from my busy work, to put myself into the train in London, and read and sleep the hours away until I reach that quiet, deep-wooded, verdurous, western country, and that lovely old house, which seems to draw to itself all the sweet influences of its surroundings, and to shed them in a beneficent shower on the heads of its occupants, to lie down in that deep silence, and to awake to all things pleasant and restful—these are joys that are always with me, either in anticipation or retrospect; and, above all times of the year, I love best to go to Sayes Court in the very early summer, when London even is a good place to live in, but the English country a foretaste of Heaven.

I had arranged such a visit in the early days of June, and it was with almost passionate distaste that I contemplated making it in company with Miss Angela Daubeny. I did not know her, and the whole point of my dissatisfaction was that neither on the journey down, nor in the hard-won week to which I had been so looking forward, did I want to. She was American, and she was a blue-stocking—at least, so I gathered from the object with which she had been invited to Sayes Court. She wanted to study the famous Codex E, chief treasure of that wonderful library in which I had spent so many happy hours, either by myself or in company with the best of all companions, its owner. At any other time I should have been pleased to meet Miss Angela Daubeny—absurd name for a student of early manuscripts!—and to have discussed with her a subject in which I was interested, and in which she must have been more than interested, or she would not have begged for permission to take a five hours' journey, immediately upon her arrival in England, to see a fragment of manuscript which, however interesting, was of far less value than the one in the British Museum or the one in Cambridge, to say nothing of those in St. Petersburg, the Vatican, and Paris. But to be obliged to convoy her through the long journey, and to have my treasured week spoilt by the intrusion of a strange, learned, American lady of uncertain age and problematical attractions—well, I took it hard, and for once failed to admire dear Talbot's shy kindness in inviting Miss Daubeny to extend her visit to some days, and in fixing it at a date when I should be there to share the responsibility of coping with her.

Middle-aged bachelors are at least as fixed in their habits, and as querulous at having them disturbed, as old maids or house-cats; and I drove up to Paddington Station in a flutter of annoyance. On my journeys to Sayes I was accustomed to travel first-class and, if possible, in a carriage by myself. It was part of the holiday. But if Miss Daubeny was a lady of hard brains, she was probably a lady of small means, and would want to travel third, as I should in her case, and generally did in my own. She would certainly not want to sit in a smoking-carriage, and might want to talk all the way.

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At any rate, there was the prospective nuisance of having to discover what she did want, and in the first place to discover *her*. If she should look half as disagreeable as I did when I stood in the booking-office and searched the faces of the ladies within my field of vision, there would be little difficulty in distinguishing her.

But it was she who distinguished me, perhaps by reason of my disengaging appearance. She came up with an air half bold, half timid, rustling her silken but concealed draperies, and blushing most attractively under her amazing floriferous hat. I could only gobble down my astonishment at her youth and beautifully elaborated appearance, as she mentioned my name with an inquiring display of dimples, and add another to my stock of impressions of that inexplicable nation to which she belonged. It was almost incredible that such a person should ever have heard of Codex E, much less have felt a genuine desire to study it. But there she was, and she was kind and considerate, as well as beautiful and learned, for she said, when we had shaken hands: "I should like to travel in the same car with you, because I'm not used to being alone in a train; but I won't talk unless you want me to, and if you would like to smoke, I don't mind in the least." Then she put her purse into my hand and said: "Please buy me a ticket—first, second, or third, I don't mind which."

So my unworthy tremors were stilled, and I was duly ashamed of them; and I hope I looked more amiable when I had fulfilled her behests than I had felt before.

I had done her another injustice in my thoughts, as I found before we reached Slough. She had been in England less than a week, but she had already seen Codex A, in the British Museum, and Codex D, in the University Library at Cambridge. She said something about the manuscripts—I forget what—but it was about Cambridge itself that she talked with most enthusiasm. "I thought *our* Cambridge was lovely," she said, "but *your* Cambridge—my!"

She made use of many Transatlantic expressions of pleasure and admiration as we slipped through the lush, green country. "It's all too lovely to be true," she said; "it's *just* like the books and the pictures. Oh, *look* at that old church among the trees!" She turned to me and laughed outright. "It makes me so *happy*," she said.

This innocent, spontaneous exhibition of feeling put me at her feet. She was like a pretty, confiding child—an expensive child, natural in spite of well-considered silks and laces. Yes, she looked expensive, in the right way. Surely those clothes and that air meant "dollars." Had she dollars, and was she studying manuscripts for fun, or did the serious study of manuscripts bring dollars in America, though it brought so few elsewhere?

After another exclamation of delight at an ordinary stone-built country house, facing south over a valley from its tree-sheltered hillside, it was natural that I should tell her something of the house to which we were both going; and she could not hear enough.

"What luck for me that Codex E should be just *there!*" she said. "I was so pleased when Lady Talbot asked me to stay. I hoped it might be lovely like that, but I never dared to hope that it was just the *one* house. And to think of my living in it! I have *never* slept in an old house—never in my life. You can't think how I want to, just for once. What is Lady Talbot like? Have they any children?"

"Children?" I repeated. "Oh, but she is Lord Talbot's mother! He is not married."

She laughed. "Then it wasn't he who found the Codex and brought it home?" she said.

"Oh, dear, no!" I said. "It was his grandfather—oh, forty or fifty years ago. Haven't you read his book?"

"No. Professor Bogue promised to lend it to me, but he never did. He told me the story. That is what made me want to see it."

Well, the story was interesting enough—of the traveller in the Levant, sleeping in a monastery perched like an eagle's eyrie on a mountain rock, of his finding his pallet covered with sheets of vellum, and of his bargaining with the monks for them, when he had guessed at what they were. It might make anyone curious to see the treasure so rescued. But Talbot had certainly said "study" in his letter to me, and she *had* gone to see Codex A and Codex D. The English countryside was taking up all her attention at present, but perhaps, when she had become a little used to it, she would be ready to talk about manuscripts. She resolutely refused to do so during the remainder of our journey.

She must have been hard to please if, when we arrived at the end of our journey, the long, carved, indented front of the old Tudor house, with its windows glowing

towards the westering sun, did not fulfil the expectations which I had encouraged her to build upon it. The clipped yews, the fountains, and the box-bordered beds of the formal garden, the deep velvet lawns and age-old cedars, the massed trees of the park and the rooks in them, were such as she must have thirsted to see, if her ideal of an old English home was anything like mine. When we came within sight of Sayes Court, she exclaimed, and then gave a deep sigh of contentment. But she said nothing until we alighted from the carriage.

I didn't know what her ideals might be of a peer of ancient lineage and notorious wealth, but, again, if she was not satisfied with the appearance and manners of Lord Talbot, eighteenth Baron of Sayes, who welcomed us in the wide porch of his house, they must have been more exacting than reasonable. It is true that he stooped and wore spectacles, also a suit of very old clothes; but his gentleness and shy courtesy, and the winning smile that I knew and loved so well, marked him always, for me, as the flower of his race, and I hoped might satisfy her.

Lady Talbot, with her white hair and finely-cut features, was more obviously of the aristocratic type, and could not have failed to make her impression, if one were on the look-out for that, as I imagined Miss Daubeny to be. She took her guest herself to her room, while Talbot and I stayed by the wood fire in the hall for a few minutes before going up to dress.

He smiled his whimsical smile. "Pleasant journey, preceptor?" he inquired.

"She's in love with the place already," I said. "I made her."

"Dear old boy, you would," he replied. "I expected blue spectacles. You didn't mind bringing her down, did you?"

"I minded the idea of it, not the reality," I confessed.

Except that she wore no jewels, Miss Angela Daubeny's evening costume was as fashionably fine, and yet fitting to her youth, as her travelling dress had been. She looked like a queen—a young queen of dollars, who is apt to be more beautiful than a real queen. Nobody could have told, from Lady Talbot's manner, what she thought of her, but I took it for granted that she was a little puzzled. She encouraged her to talk, and she talked a good deal, with a gay delight in her surroundings and in her prospective travels, and an almost wistful touch of childlike appeal as to whether what she was saying was on the right note.

It was all just right. Her speech was soft and cultured, and her little Americanisms only flavoured it agreeably. With that knowledge of the fine art of dress, and the means to indulge it, with that note in her speech which is only gained at the top of a society, in whatever country the society may flourish, she must surely be, in America, "somebody." Yet she was travelling alone, without even a maid, and she had never been in Europe before. She told us nothing about herself, but then one does not expect queens—of dollars or anything else—to tell you about themselves; you are supposed to know. Besides, it was part of the appeal she made—an appeal to which, before dinner was over, both Lady Talbot and my shy friend had clearly and quite willingly succumbed—that she did not talk about herself, as most people directly or indirectly do.

It would have been impossible for Lady Talbot to have asked a fishing question, but she went as near it as she was capable of, when, in some connection, I mentioned the name of her sister-in-law, Lady Berwick. "She was American," she said, turning to Miss Daubeny.

"Oh, yes, I knew her when she was over, two years ago," said the girl; and although she seemed little interested in Lady Berwick, she must have met her intimately, from the things she let fall before we went on to another topic.

It was not until I was alone in my room, late that night, leaning out of the window and drinking in the peace of the gardens and the woods, thinking also over the events of the evening which Miss Daubeny had so pleasurably disturbed, that I asked myself why, if she was of the Americans who go to Newport, and meet in intimacy the Lady Berwicks of that opulent and aristocratically connected society, Sayes Court was the only country house in England to which she had received an invitation, and an invitation which, with whatever leniency her request might be viewed, she had asked for.

There were other things to remember, and I went over them in my mind and collated them.

She had not known that Lady Talbot was her host's mother, or of what generation *he* was. Well, she had *said* that she did not know. Was that possible? Are not these things as well known in the cosmopolite marrying circles of America as in those of England? Would not one, at least, take the easy means of finding them out, when

one was proposing a visit, such as she had proposed, even of an hour or two?

I recalled the scene in the long library, lined with its mellowed, priceless treasures, when the precious manuscript that she had come to see was taken out of its glass case and spread on a table for her inspection. I saw her dark, comely head in the circle of the lamp, with Talbot's in close proximity to it, and felt again the tension, before she spoke, of the moment.

"Ah, I see you know the weak point," Talbot had said, when she turned the leaves over at once to the place where the most striking of the later interpolations had been made. She *did* know about uncials and cursives, and all the rest of it—more, at any rate, than Talbot did, who was interested in other studies. She told him things about Codex E, and he was pleasurably struck, I could see, with her learning. But I, who am only a smatterer, had learnt nothing new from her, and I now asked myself if she really knew any more than she could have got up out of a text-book, supposing her to have hit upon that pretext to gain a footing at Sayes.

The question showed me what I was rather shocked to learn—that I suspected her. For I had had no suspicions at the time. If she could have got up the subject of Biblical manuscripts with the design of making an entrance into Sayes Court, she could not have had the same reason for getting up the folios of Shakespeare, for Talbot's had been privately bought only the week before, and nobody knew there was one at Sayes. There was a bequest from his grandfather with which to add to the library from time to time, and until now it had been almost entirely without Shakespearian interest. But she had knowledge on that subject, too—more, at any rate, than she had displayed about Codex E—and on other subjects, which she may or may not have known to have been connected with the books at Sayes Court. Her knowledge was not a pretence, although it may not have been that of a scholar.

No, it was the other things—unexplained things, which seemed to need an explanation—that had aroused my suspicions, and particularly the contrast of her plans for her holiday—Oxford, Stratford-upon-Avon, the Lakes, the Highlands, all the ordinary resorts of the ordinary unconnected tourist—with what might have been expected, in the way of London season gaieties and country house visits, from her air of fashion.

How was the puzzle elucidated by the most surprising episode of all—that of the book on the table?

It was a copy of Burke's Peerage, ranged with other current works of reference behind the heavy equipage of Talbot's big writing-table. Passing behind it, she had ran her eye over the titles, and, with that pretty, questioning lighting up of her face, and her finger on the fat red volume, said: "Oh, do let me see if I am in this!"

And she was. "Angela Mary," daughter of I forget whom, son of a General Daubeny who had fought for the South in the Civil War, and descendant of a younger son of an early eighteenth-century earl, who had emigrated to the American colonies and rooted his branch of the stock there.

We had excited ourselves a little over the discovery, for Talbot had pointed out two places where their families had intermarried—one of them before the emigration—and had reckoned out exactly what sort of cousinship there was between them. It was, I think, in the tenth degree, and she was of one generation older than he was, so that she was in the position of a sort of aunt, over which we had made merry.

Well, but why wasn't she visiting the English Daubenys, the highly placed ones, to whom she belonged? And if she was down in the book, somebody must have put her there, and the information could only have come from her immediate belongings. Why that delighted air of discovery? Was it genuine? If not—— But it was too puzzling. I gave it up and went to bed.

It was Talbot who took her round the gardens, immediately after breakfast on the next lovely morning, and stayed with her, mostly away from the house, until it was time to get ready for church. This was so unlike him—for, although women loved him for his gentle courtesy, and perhaps a little for his great wealth, he had already earned the character of a misogynist—that my misgivings were again aroused. Had this bright, lovely child—I loved her all the time, even when I mistrusted her—with the first cast of her line caught him, when the expert fishers in matrimonial waters had almost ceased to disturb the quiet pool where he lay? Did she want to catch him? Was that what she was here for?

Shame overtook me when I tried to elucidate certain matters as we walked across the park together after church, Talbot and his mother having stayed to a later service. Her raptures over the little Norman church in the grove of beeches, the quiet service, the old



"She *did* know about uncials and cursives."

clergyman, with his white hair, and the congregated villagers, having received expression, I said: "But, my dear lady, if you want this sort of thing, you can get it all over England. I should think you could find a Daubeny or one of their relations in every county."

"But I don't know any of them," she said, turning her flower-like face, with its wide-open violet eyes, upon me. It was so lovely that I forbore to make the obvious retort.

But she was clever enough—or alert enough—to read it in my silence. She turned away with a blush. "I suppose you mean that I didn't know the dear people here," she said. "But I never expected that they would ask me to stay with them."

As I was in for it, I might as well find out something I wanted to know. "Aren't you going to see Lady Berwick," I asked, "or any of all the smart people you must have met on the other side?"

Again those wide-open eyes, with a look of hurt surprise. "But I was only a governess when I met Lady Berwick," she said, "in the house where she was staying. She was very nice to me, but I couldn't very well fasten myself on her here, could I?"

To say that I was contrite hardly expresses my complete revulsion of feeling. What a snob, I was, trying to fix her with intimacies to which she had made no claim—a prying snob, in the light of her instant readiness to acknowledge a position which she had only not stated because she had thought it quite unimportant! "You must forgive me," I said; "only, over here, governesses very seldom look like you."

She turned away her face as we walked on in the sunlight. "I didn't say I was a governess now," she said.

My repentance took from me all desire to ask what she was now. She was herself, and whether or no she had acquired dollars since her emancipation, as she very well might have done, or how she had acquired them, made no matter.

But I was not to be let off further confusion. "Perhaps," she went on, in her lilting voice, "you would like to know how I got interested in manuscripts and books, and all that. I was very well educated, you know. My father was Professor of English Literature in "—I forget the name of the college she mentioned, but I had never heard of it—"and when he died, I taught in a family; and then I was secretary to Professor Bogue for nearly two years. *He* taught me about manuscripts, and I worked at it as hard as I could, because I liked it."

"Oh, yes, yes!" I said. "Please don't think I am——"

But she interrupted me, turning her eyes on me again; and they were challenging, this time. "Do you think I ought to tell Lady Talbot all about myself?" she asked. "I never thought of it. Would she turn me out of the house if she knew I had been a governess?"

I made foolish murmurs of deprecation, but she had not finished with me. "She could write to Lady Berwick, you know, and find out if I am telling the truth," she went on. "I think I had better tell her, because, if *you* think I meant to create the impression that I belong to the Four Hundred, she might think it too."

"Oh, no, no!" I said, trying to soothe her, for I felt with acute discomfort that the tide of her displeasure was rising in a steady, remorseless way which might end in overwhelming me.

"My father didn't think much of the Four Hundred," she continued, without noticing my expostulation. "He used to say that an aristocracy that was self-conscious wasn't a true aristocracy, and in England—but he was a thorough American, and had never been here—it was only the *parvenus* who were conscious of rank. It seems he was wrong, and it is necessary to explain oneself. I must thank you for the hint, and I will lose no time in doing what is necessary."

We had reached the house, and she swept into it with her head in the air, leaving me planted there, a prey to distressful confusion.

It was after luncheon—during the progress of which she had not spoken to me more than was necessary, and the conversation generally had not flowed as at dinner the night before—that Talbot said to me: "My dear preceptor, what on earth have you been saying to Miss Daubeny? She seems to think we suspect her of being an adventuress."

"Did she tell you that?" I asked.

"Of course not; my mother did."

"It was she who made all the fuss," I said, vexed with her, for I had thought over our conversation, and saw little cause in my part of it for her carrying her resentment so far. "Didn't *you* think it a little odd that she shouldn't have a single friend in England to go to?"

"My dear boy, what a question!" he expostulated kindly. "Of course I didn't; I never thought about it at all."

"Well, I expect Lady Talbot did," I said.

"I'm quite sure she didn't," he replied. "Why should she? It was always quite obvious that that very charming young lady was 'all right,' as they say, I'm not pleased with you for upsetting her, preceptor. She actually insisted upon telling my mother that her father died poor, and that until her uncle left her his money, a month or two ago, she had had to earn her living. She cried. I hate to think of that bright creature in tears."

Oh, well, if she had cried, and if her tears had affected Talbot in that way, nothing that I could do or say in my own excuse could alter what now seemed in a fair way of coming to pass, even if I wanted to alter it. What I did not want was that Lady Talbot should misjudge me; and at the cost of seeming a little tiresome, I did succeed, later, in expressing to her my regret at having made Miss Daubeny cry—and incidentally explain herself.

"I don't know whether you can see what is coming," I said, rather tremulous at being about to open her eyes, and the effect my disclosure would make on her.

She faced me with her calm gaze. "You mean that Talbot is going to fall in love with her," she said; and it was my eyes that opened.

"Then you don't mind?" I asked her.

She did not answer my question directly, but asked me another: "Don't you believe in her yet?"

I wouldn't say "No," and I couldn't say "Yes." She had explained everything that I thought needed explanation, and in the frankest way. Her birth was a happy accident on the right side; dollars, whether she had them in abundance or not, would not matter if she were going to marry Talbot; and her beauty and charm were not less than those of any American-born peeress I had ever met. And yet I was not sure of her, even if Lady Talbot, surprisingly, on such short acquaintance, was. But I couldn't have said why, even to myself, and I must needs hold my peace altogether and await developments.

There was no talk of her leaving Sayes during the week I was there, nor was there much pretence of her studying Codex E or anything else, except the house and its surroundings, always under the personal guidance of Talbot. She was treated just as if she had been brought to Sayes to be proposed to in due course, according to an understood arrangement. If she had been her own distant cousin, Lady Evelyn Daubeny, who was also a cousin, rather nearer, of Talbot's, Lady Talbot could not have looked on with more perfect composure at her son's growing absorption in her society. He, with all his gifts of fortune, seemed only now to have learnt what it meant to be happy; and, as for the girl, she was like sunshine, spring breezes, and dancing water, and all things gay and lovely. My doubts of her disappeared—it was shame to remember them—and she seemed quite to have forgotten the disturbance I had brought upon her, for I had my due share of her smiles and bright speech, and we were all happy together.

On a morning a week after our arrival she and I were alone in a yew-enclosed rose-garden, while Talbot was occupied with his agent indoors. We both had books, and I at least had been reading for some time, when I was startled by a sudden cry from her. "Oh, I can't do it!" she said, and I looked up to find her sitting forward in her chair, with her hands to her face.

I could say nothing and do nothing but stare at her. But I was conscious of a frightened shrinking of heart, and it was as if all the happy birds around us had suddenly ceased their song and were waiting.

"I know you suspected me from the first," she said, speaking quickly and not looking at me, "and you were right. I *did* come here to marry him, and I'm not what I made myself out. Oh, why did I tell such lies?"

My surprise and my fears on my friend's behalf robbed me of any sympathy with her in her distress. "Has he asked you to marry him?" I said shortly.

"Yes, he has, and I said I would. But I can't do it. You must tell him."

"Tell him what? Why can't you do it?"

My voice was hard, and it steadied her. "I'm going to tell you," she said, more quietly. "Of course I knew about him—Lady Berwick had talked—and about all this." She made a motion of her head, and I knew she meant Sayes and all that Sayes meant. "I simply thirsted for it—I suppose it was my English blood—and I thought why shouldn't *I* have my chance of it with all those girls who marry Englishmen? And when my uncle died, I came over, and I made the Codex the excuse to come here, thinking they *might* ask me to stay. It wasn't true what I told you."

What wasn't true? Only the pretence of not knowing and not wishing. In my surprise and great relief, after her outburst, at finding that all the rest *was* true—for she had prepared me for anything, even to hear that she was not Miss Daubeny at all—I

could only make light of that, though not, perhaps, immediately to her. "I don't think it was nice of you," I said, with semi-paternal severity. "But you have got what you wanted. What prevents your taking it? What else is there?"

My heart sank again when she said: "I haven't told you the worst yet."

"Well, you had better get it all out," I said grudgingly.

"My uncle only left me four thousand dollars," she made her further confession. "I spent that on my clothes and on my journey—at least, I shall have nothing when I get back."

Again I was immensely relieved. "Talbot doesn't want dollars," I said; "he has more than enough for two. And I don't suppose he will let you go back. Why do you want to go? Is there anything more?"

"No, nothing. Isn't that enough? It is all different now. Oh, I can't let him! I didn't know he would be like he is. Can't you see?" She threw the question at me impatiently, as if it were *my* obliquity that was under discussion.

I saw several things all at once. I saw that she was bitterly ashamed of herself, and that, if it had been possible for her to run away at that moment, she would have run away, whatever might have happened afterwards. And I saw that the reason for her shame was that she had fallen in love with him as well as with his possessions. I softened towards her completely. I may have been wrong, though nothing has since occurred to convict me of error, but I thought that her impulses showed her more worthy to stand by the side of that best of men, before the altar and through life, than anything I had known of her before, and I told her so, while blaming her for her duplicity. "But it was different then; you wouldn't do it now," I concluded my lecture.

She turned on me with her face aflame. "As if I could!" she exclaimed indignantly.

I relieved the tension by laughing at her, at which she showed impatience, but no longer shame. I hoped that I had relieved her a little of that. "If you have made a promise, you must keep it," I said. "You have made your confession, and I take it upon myself to absolve you."

She sat with brooding eyes. Then she sprang up out of her chair and stood in the sunlight and laughed too. "Oh, I am so *heavenly* happy!" she said, which went to show that my absolution had been efficacious.

Sometimes I wonder now why she told me anything at all. In my shaded hours I remind myself that the affair of the dollars had to come out, and that it was I who, acting for her in the non-existence of immediate relations, had to break it to Talbot—who laughed at me and wanted no explanations—that he was not marrying an heiress. But when the sun shines, I remember her face and her voice in the rose-garden, and then I am satisfied that she was, as her husband once said, "all right."

NOW SPRING'S IN THE WORLD AGAIN.

THERE'S a cloud o' bloom on the blackthorn, pale as a pearl to see,
There's a lark high up in the blue sky that's singing to you and me,
There's a sudden sweet wind, bringing fragrance of violets and silver rain
Down the orchard, all starry with stitchworts, now Spring's in the world again.

There are glints of gold in the gorse-patch, 'gainst blue of the far-off fells,
There's the stir of the sleepy bee-folk towards honey in cowslip bells,
There's the gay wild lilt o' the peat-stream, adance down the small steep lane,
'Neath the almond boughs knotted with roses, now Spring's in the world again.

There's the make-believe note of the wryneck, as tho' 'twere the cuckoo's own,
And it beats in my heart like the Spring's voice, with love in its ev'ry tone,
There are thoughts like white blossom I'd bring you, and songs like sweet birds' refrain,
If you'd listen, heart's dear, if you'd answer, now Spring's in the world again.

AUGUSTA HANCOCK.

PUCK O' THE DUSK.

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS,

Author of "Neighbours Unknown," "Kings in Exile," "The House in the Water," etc.

Bat, bat, come under my hat,
And I will give you a slice of bacon.



SO sings Mother Goose, with that airy irrelevancy, that unblushing disregard of probability, which make her so fascinating a companion to the wise, but so dangerous, so misleading a guide to the ardent young mind in search of facts. There is nothing in the context to show why the lady, unlike all other ladies who have ever lived, should invite the bat to come under her hat, or even be able to contemplate without shrieks the possibility of a bat coming under her hat. It may be but another instance of that wilfulness, that indifference to convention, which she displays in almost all her poems. Or it may be that she wanted to show how much braver she was than all other women. In either case, we may be sure that she never intended the bat to accept her invitation. The inducement which she offered was one which no bat in the world would give a rap for. And being, for all her eccentricities, a lady of wide and varied knowledge, she doubtless knew that about the last place in the world where any bat would go was under a hat—any hat, no matter how enchanting the face beneath it. Perhaps, after all, she was merely poking a little sly fun at her sisters of the Universal Feminine for their frantic delusion that a bat would like to get into their hair. Mother Goose knew very well that nothing but superior force, unscrupulously employed, would make a bat entangle himself in any woman's hair, however bewildering.

It was not of hats, or of hair, indeed, that Puck o' the Dusk was thinking, as he zigzagged through the purple twilight under the thick-leaved, overhanging boughs. Gnats, for the moment, were all his thought. The long, still hours of the golden summer day he had slept away very pleasantly, hanging by his toes from the edge of a warped board far up in the shadowy peak of the old barn in the meadow. Other brown bats had hung there beside him, suspended, like him, by their long, hooked toe-nails, and demurely sheathed, like him, in the silken dusky membrane of their folded wings. It was a popular dormitory for the bats, up there in the dim peak, for the edge of that warped board gave a convenient place whereon to attach themselves; and, consequently, there had been some crowding. From time to time one or another, finding himself squeezed, would wake up and squeak and prod his neighbour with the bony elbow of his wing, and chatter protestingly in a tiny voice—very tiny, but thinly harsh and vibrant, like the winding of a cheap watch. Puck himself, who chanced to hang on the very end of the row, next to the wide crack in the gable which gave exit to the outer air, had more than once been almost crowded from his perch, so that he had had to do rather more than his share of waking up, elbowing, and watch-winding. Once or twice, too, in this unwonted wakefulness, he had been annoyed by the sight of a large rat, prowling along a big beam far beneath him and glaring up at him with cruel, beady eyes. He loathed rats, but, knowing himself securely out of this one's reach, he had not been alarmed. He had folded himself up in his wings and gone to sleep again, even while the enemy was looking at him. So, on the whole, the day had gone by pleasantly enough. As the afternoon drew on, he had roused himself several times to scramble flutteringly over to the crack in the gable and take a glance out at the weather, till at last, when the sun had fairly sunk behind the low hills on the other side of the stream, he had sidled through the crack and launched himself upon the gold-and-violet dusk. Within ten minutes he had been followed by all the other occupants of the dormitory, and the peak of the old barn was left empty.

He was a strange-looking creature, the

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little brown bat—a mixture of bird and mouse and goblin, droll, yet sinister—an impish Puck who drowsed away the hours of sun, and awoke at dusk to whimsical and eccentric activities. His insignificant body, covered with a short brown fur of exquisite fineness, was hung between two immense wings of sooty-dark membrane. This membrane, more elastic than the finest rubber, was stretched, like silk over an umbrella frame, upon the enormously developed arm and finger-bones of the fore-limbs. The two wings were joined together at the tail, and connected with the frail hind-legs as far down as the knees, which seemed to bend in the wrong direction. Between the powerful shoulder-blades was set a curious little shapeless head, with a pug of a nose, whimsically wide and crooked mouth, big flat ears, and tiny, beadlike, impishly-glittering black eyes.

Awkward and grotesque as he was when swinging from his perch or scrambling up the boarding, the moment he launched himself upon the twilight air, Puck o' the Dusk presented a masterly, though still fantastic, figure. With a combined spread and flexibility of wing such as, weight for weight, no bird could match, his evolutions in the air were of a miraculous alertness. Flying at top speed in a straight line, he could drop instantly like a stone, or dart upwards at apparently right angles to his course, as if shot from a catapult. A dizzying and bewildering zigzag seemed to be his natural flight, and he could dodge in a fashion that would put even the sparrowhawk to shame. And this, indeed, was well. For the darting, dancing gnats and other swift insects were Puck's prey, and the pouncing owls his peculiar enemy.

To-night, as he swung along the scented trees by the water, the windless air was full of insects—gnats, early night-moths, and the first blundering cockchafers. Being hungry, he hawked ravenously at everything he saw. But as the dusk gathered, and the edge passed off his appetite, he grew more fastidious. He would let many dainties, easily to be had, slip from his very lips, and amuse himself by flickering off in quest of the more nearly unattainable. Once, catching sight of a high-flying moth far above the tree-tops, silhouetted, to his keen vision, against the pale violet sky, he shot upward swift as thought, snatched the prize from the very beak of a swooping night-jar, and was gone before the disappointed bird could realise who had forestalled her. Again, dropping headlong, he snapped a cockchafer off a bending grass-head, just as it was spreading its wings to fly, to the furious indignation of a shrew which had been stalking the insect, and was on the very point of springing up at it. It is probable that Puck's eyes, to which the twilight was clear as crystal, had marked the prowling shrew in the grass, and that he took a whimsical delight in snatching the prize. Even the darting swifts were sometimes befooled in this way, as an elusive shadow would flicker past them and the all-but-captured moth mysteriously vanish.

Soon, as the violet light paled from the sky, Puck o' the Dusk deserted his meadow and flew downstream, over field and hedge, to a spacious garden, with lawns and flower-beds, and a wide-verandahed house set in deep trees. Here the bland summer night was drawing forth an intoxication of perfume from the dew-wet roses and stocks, the Japan lilies, and the spicy-breathed carnations; and hither, enticed by the honey scents, the insects of the night came in swarms. Up and down the wide path at the foot of the garden, under the trees by the water-side, a man and a girl were walking, the girl's white dress glimmering softly in the shadows.

In this pleasant spot Puck was joined by another little brown bat, perhaps his mate, in any case, for the moment, his playmate. He has not yet revealed enough of his domestic habits to enable one to speak confidently on this point. For a little while the two seemed to weave leisurely dances in the air, circling around and over and beneath each other, and from time to time swinging apart on long, dizzying tangents, to meet again unerringly at some aerial point of rendezvous. The female flew less lightly, less erratically, than Puck himself; and if one could have observed her at close quarters in a good light, one would have seen that, however playful, she was a most faithful and devoted little mother, carrying her two babies with her through all her frivolling. The little ones managed, in some strange way, to cling about her neck, so securely that not her swiftest whirlings, her most breathless, swooping swings, ran any risk of dislodging them. But it must have been a lively experience for the infants, who were yet too young to be left at home in the barn, where a prowling mouse might find them.

In the midst of their play, from somewhere out of space, a wide-winged, noiseless shape swept down upon them. Two enormous eyes, perfectly round, fixed, and palely

luminous, glared at them, and huge claws, clutching hideously, snatched at them, this way and that, in dreadful silence. Both Puck and the little mother succeeded in escaping the grasping claws, so lightning swift was their evasion, as if, indeed, they had been blown aside like leaves by the owl's attack. Instantly they vanished deep among the branches, and the disappointed owl winnowed onward to seek some quarry less elusive. In a moment or two the bats fluttered forth again. But, though undaunted, they felt the need of caution while the enemy was still in the neighbourhood. So they betook themselves for their play to the lower end of the garden, where the man and the girl were walking, and began circling and dancing about their preoccupied heads. They considered human beings harmless, and quite useful to keep away owls.

Suddenly, to Puck's amazement, the girl gave a tiny shriek, and hurriedly twisted her light silken scarf about her fair head till she looked like a Pitti Madonna.

"Oh," she cried nervously, "there's another of those dreadful bats trying to get into my hair!"

The man laughed softly and drew her to him.

"Silly one," said he, "the bat couldn't be persuaded to get into even *your* hair! He would have the poor taste to consider it most annoying."

"Oh, but he might blunder into it by mistake," persisted the girl, her wide eyes following apprehensively, from the shelter of his arm, the evolutions of the two dancing shadows. "You know they are almost blind. And when I was a little girl, Nurse told me that if ever a bat got into my hair, I'd have to have it all cut off, because he would be so snarled up in it there would be no such thing as getting him out."

"Nurse knew a tremendous lot of things that weren't so, I should imagine," rejoined the man. "You will save yourself much anxiety, sweet, on summer evenings, if you bear in mind that bats are as far as possible from being blind. They are marvellously keen-sighted, and they never blunder, but fly and dodge with an accuracy far beyond that of any bird. Either of those little chaps fluttering around us now could pick a gnat off the tip of your small, delectable nose without so much as grazing you with his wing."

"Oh!" said the girl in a tone of relief. "But I don't like them, anyhow. I wish they would go away."

"Like all the world, they hasten to gratify your slightest wish!" responded the man, laughing again. For, even at the girl's last words, both Puck and his playmate had swung away and vanished among the tree-tops.

It was not that they understood English, or had received upon their sensitive nerve centres a telepathic message from the girl's aversion. Not at all. The fact was simply that the little mother had grown tired, from the weight of her babies hanging to her neck, and had flown off to find a safe branch whereon to hide them for a few moments.

High up in the dark top of a pine tree, the cup-like hollow of a forked bough received the two young ones, who, at some injunction from their mother, flattened their tiny forms to the bark and clung fast to its roughness. There could be no danger for them here, thought the little mother. So she left them, to rest her wings for a few minutes in unburdened flight, and to sup again on a few more gnats and moths. Puck had watched her deposit her babies on the branch, and now flew off with her light-heartedly to forage above the flower-beds.

They had not been away for more than ten minutes, when the little mother suddenly got it into her head that her babies wanted her. On a swinging upward curve she sped in haste back to the pine-top, and Puck, after a second's hesitation, followed at her tiny heels.

Now, it chanced that a weasel, his cruel eyes red with rage and lust of blood, was hunting in the pine tree. He had just lost the trail of a squirrel, which he had been pursuing so closely that he had counted it already his. He had fairly imagined his teeth in the poor chatterer's throat, when, by some miracle of the night—and night among the wild kindreds is full of miracles—quarry and trail had disappeared. It was in the pine tree it had happened, and the furious hunter was questing all over the tree for the lost scent, determined that his malignancy should not be baulked. In his search he ran, sinuous and swift as a snake, out along that high branch in one of whose outer forks the little bat had left her babies.

Now, Puck o' the Dusk, in all his short life, had never had a real difference of opinion with anything more formidable than a hawk-moth or a cockchafer. He knew vaguely what an irresistible and terrible monster was that long, dark shape on the branch, yet he did not hesitate. The weasel was astounded to feel a hard wing-tip drawn

sharply across his face. With a thin snarl he sprang upward half the length of his body, snapping at his audacious insulter. But his long, white teeth closed on empty air, and he nearly lost his balance on the branch. As he recovered himself, bursting with fury, he saw behind him, almost within reach, a dark little fluttering shadow, apparently sprawling on the branch, like a wounded night-jar. Doubling on himself as lithely as an eel, he darted like a jet of flame upon the insolent little shadow. But even as he did so, it was gone; and a few feet below the branch he saw Puck o' the Dusk flitting leisurely to and fro. His narrow-set eyes blazed like live coals, and he gnashed his long white fangs at the indignity of having been so flouted by a paltry bat. But while he glared down at his small challenger, the little mother had safely gathered her droll babies to her neck and sailed off with them through the gloom. For the moment, after such an experience, she had had enough of frivolling. She thought only of getting her babies back into their safe cranny in the roof of the barn, where she could nurse them, and lick their silky fur, and clean the dainty membranes of their delicate little wings by passing them carefully between her lips.

Left once more to himself, Puck o' the Dusk, perhaps excited and over-daring from his successful adventure with the weasel, promptly fell foul of another novel experience. Close in front of the house he chased a big moth, which was flying with unwonted swiftness. Hard pressed, it flew straight into the darkness of a wide-open window. Puck followed audaciously. He caught the fugitive as it bumped up against the ceiling. In the same instant a maid shut the window. Then, without noticing the intruder, she went out and shut the door.

Puck, thinking to go out as easily as he had come in, flew hard against the pale glimmer of the glass. He was a little dazed, and very much astonished. Again, and yet once again, he tried to penetrate the hard, invisible barrier, but not blindly, or in panic violence, as a bird would have done. He kept his head even in this startling and unprecedented emergency. His keen vision, after the first shock of surprise, differentiated the glass from the airy space beyond, and he coolly gave up essaying the impossible. Then he devoted himself to a minute examination of every hole and corner in the room; yet so accurate was he in sight and flight alike, that though the room was full of dainty *bibelots* and fragile knick-knacks, the beating of his wings disturbed nothing. He went under every piece of furniture, behind every picture, and investigated persistently the screen which closed the fireplace for the summer. In the course of this minute exploration he routed out an unexpected variety of insects, and he was by no means too perturbed to devour all such dainties that fell to his lot.

The night passed in this way, with some anxiety, indeed, but without monotony. When dawn came grey through the window, and the colour began to return to the glowing geranium-beds, then Puck relinquished his vain quest, but not in despair, by any means. Day for him was the time to go to bed. Hanging himself up comfortably in a fold of the heavy *portières* at one end of the room, he went to sleep with as philosophical a composure as if he had been on his board under the peak of the old barn.

A few hours later two housemaids came into the room and fell to cleaning it. In the course of this operation they took down the *portières*. They shook them in a haphazard way, preparatory to folding them up. To their consternation, out fell Puck o' the Dusk.

Their screams at the sight of this monster, nearly four inches long, brought in the man who had been walking in the garden with the girl the night before. He was in riding-breeches and gloves. Puck, only half awake, and very angry at having been so rudely disturbed, sat up on the rug with wings half outspread and tiny black eyes sparkling. The expression of his opinions to the housemaids was as vehement as he could make it, and sounded something like the winding of a *very* large and very insufficiently oiled cheap watch.

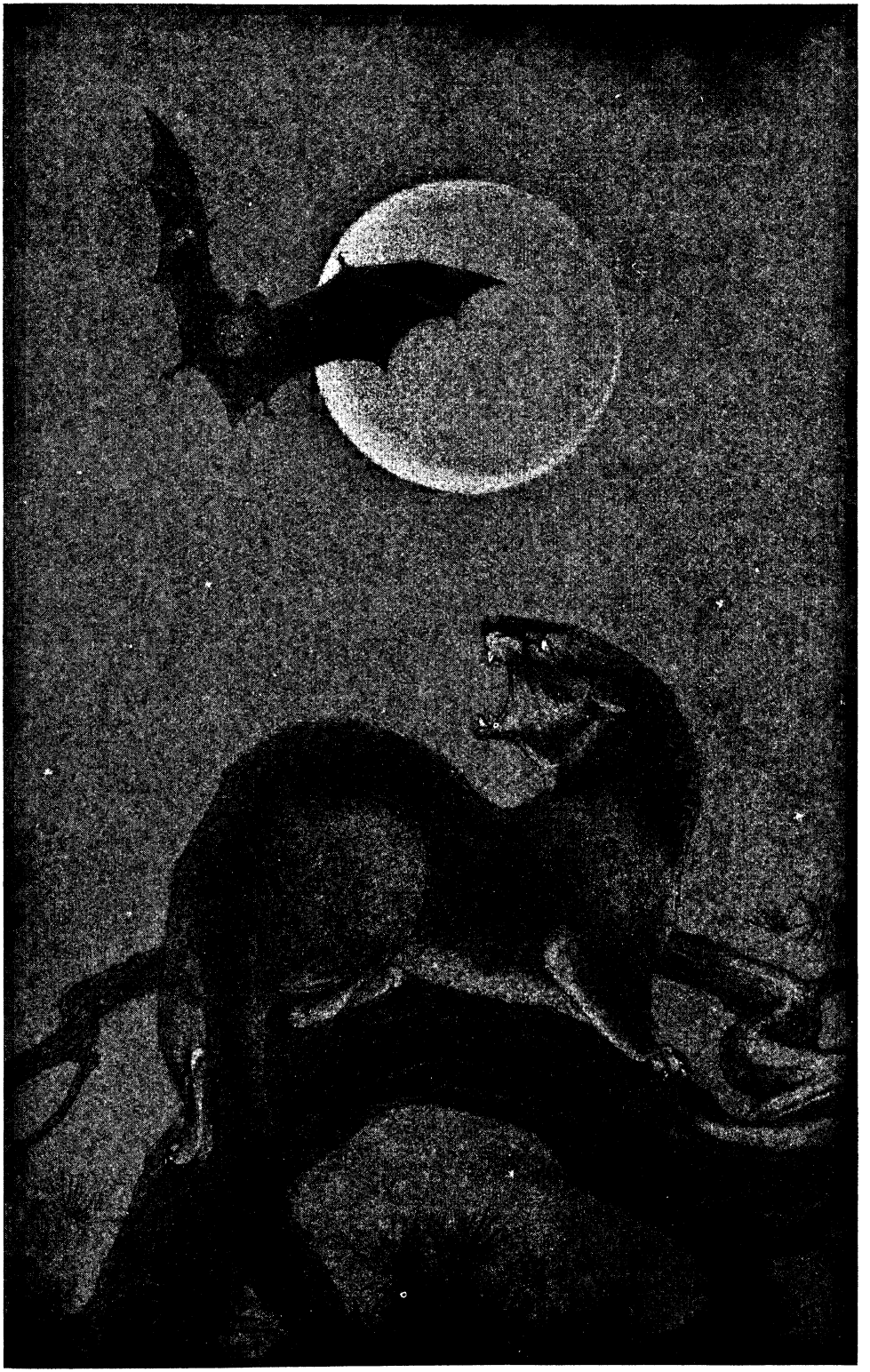
"Good Heavens, Jane," exclaimed the man, "I thought that you and Grace must have unearthed *at least* a hippopotamus, from the row you're making! Do you think that this poor little bat is going to eat you?"

He stooped to pick Puck up, but the little fellow sputtered at him shrilly, and snapped at him with such defiance that the man was glad of his thick gloves. The maids tittered.

"See there, sir!" said Jane audaciously. "He'd eat us if he could, he's that savage!"

"He certainly is a plucky little devil," said the man, as he lifted him gently in his gloved hands and carried him to the window.

Puck was very wide awake now, and his



"He darted like a jet of flame upon the insolent little shadow. But even as he did so, it was gone."

watch-winding was shrill with indignation over his imprisonment in the man's hands. At the window the man released him. The glare of full daylight dazzled him, but, shutting his eyes to a hair-like slit, almost invisible, he could make out the landscape quite clearly. In an instant he had launched himself, and in the next he was fluttering among the nearest branches. Keeping as far as possible among the trees, he made for the water's edge, and so along the meadows to the old barn. A minute or two later he was hanging himself up, unruffled, beside his sleeping comrades in the warm brown gloom of the peak.

In the ordinary course of events, Puck would now have settled himself to sleep away the rest of the daylight. But this twenty-four hours was destined to be a crowded time for him. On the narrow, topmost rafter, just a few feet below him, he observed his playmate of the previous evening, the little mother with her two babies. She had deposited them on the smooth surface of the beam, while she herself was occupied with her toilet—a matter which is of as much concern to a bat as it is to the daintiest of cats. With amazing expertness she would scratch herself behind the ears with the clawed tips of her wing-elbows, and comb the fur on apparently inaccessible portions of her body. Then she would take her wing membranes, first one, then the other, and stretch them, examine them, pass them between her teeth, and lick them, till there could be no question as to their immaculateness.

While she was thus occupied, one of the swallows from the mud nests under the eaves darted hastily up into the peak in pursuit of a big purple bee. The desperate insect, just evading its pursuer in the peak, boomed downwards close over the rafter, almost grazing the baby bats as he passed. The swallow, dashing after him recklessly, more than grazed the little sprawlers. He brushed them so rudely that they were swept clean off the rafter. Untaught as yet to fly, they nevertheless spread instinctively their fragile wings, and fell flutteringly, like two dead oak leaves, to the floor below.

The barn floor, fortunately, was littered thick with the seeds and tips and refuse of last year's hay, so the babies landed softly and were not hurt. But they landed far apart, as two whirling leaves might have done. The mother, who at the moment of the accident was fairly enveloped in the folds of her wings, disengaged herself frantically and swooped downwards after them. Then Puck, grown enterprising from his late adventures, came zigzagging down in her wake, to see if there was anything he could do.

There was, and that instantly. The big rat who lived under the barn floor was just coming out of his hole. He thought he had seen something fall, and though he did not know what it was, he came scuttling forward with high hopes. It might, he thought, be a young swallow dropped or crowded out of its nest, and he liked young swallows, for variety.

Suddenly his attention was distracted by a light blow on his head. It was a bat, which had apparently almost dropped upon his back. He was not angry—quite the contrary — he was immensely interested. He had never eaten a bat, though he had often wanted to; and here, seemingly, was his chance, for this bat appeared to be hurt or sick. He jumped up at it. He missed it, to be sure, but not by so very much; and the bat was still fluttering feebly almost within his reach. Again and again he sprang, his long, white teeth snapping together with a horrid click, but catching nothing, till presently he found himself once more over by the hole in the corner whence he had just emerged. Then, to his disgust, the feebly fluttering shape which had seemed just within his clutch went darting off on strong wings to the roof, while another bat rose whirling from the middle of the floor, with two little ones clinging to her neck.

Baffled and sullen, the rat crept out into the grass to console himself with easy grasshoppers; while Puck o' the Dusk, swelling with triumph, swung back to his high perch. What with owls and weasels, moths and men and rats, he felt far from his customary drowsiness; so he set himself to a toilet elaborate and minute, as befitted a brown bat of his achievements.

FROM "THE PLUME OF FEATHERS."

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

VI. THE CARRIER PIGEON.

THERE happened a great scourge of wood-doves round about the vale of Widecombe, and so terrible plenteous was the destructive birds that a few farmers—the leading men of the valley—got together and decreed that something must be done. Jim Mumford, from Dunstone, and Moses Butt, from Southbourne, and Uncle Tom Cobleigh, from Venton, and old Harry Hawke and young Harry Hawke, from Woodhayes—as be called the Manor House in old maps—they all comed together in the form of a committee against the wood-doves; and the committee met to Johnny Rowland's public, "The Plume of Feathers." They sat close 'pon two hours in Johnny's bar parlour; and when we chaps in the bar was pretty near tired of waiting, out they come with their great resolve. They'd put Moses Butt in the chair, him being a silent man, well addicted to listening, and when t'others had all had their say, young Harry Hawke carried the vote unanimous, including Butt, in the chair, as voted on the motion afore the meeting; though there weren't no need for him to do so, owing to every man among 'em being of one and the same opinion.

Young Harry's idea was a big shoot, because the birds had come in their hundreds of dozens, and were grown to be a serious pest. They treated the young root crops something shameful, and 'twas said us would have to give over swede and mangold if they wasn't swept away. And how can a farmer give over swede and mangold? So a great masterpiece of a shoot was to be planned, and not less than fifty guns got together. A day was to be appointed, and everybody all round notified of the accepted time. Then each man, and each man's son, and each hind, as could be trusted to carry a gun and shoot straight with 'un, was all to go forth to woods and fields for a wide space round about; and so the doves would be driven from pillar to post, as the saying is; and none felt any doubt but that thousands would fall. In fact, the same thing had been done twenty year back, and the owners of the manors had throwed open their woods for the shooters, and a proper bag of pigeons had taken place. Uncle Tom Cobleigh and old Harry Hawke minded all about it; and old Harry called home how a man by the name of Ashwater—a Cornish foreigner—had disgraced hisself at Heatree, in Master Jan Kitson's coverts, and shot a pheasant. Of course, he sware afore the justices of the peace after, that he thought 'twas a wood-dove, but that didn't do, because they Cornish chaps be only just a thought less witty in their intellects than us Devonshire ones, and 'tis quite certain none amongst 'em would have fallen into such a foolish error.

We laughed at that, and by good chance it put Johnny in mind of a very fine and ancient tale. He spoke to Sam Bonus, who was in company, and axed him if he remembered the courting of his father and mother—both gone now—and Bonus said as he'd heard the tale, but couldn't very well tell it again, because he hadn't the language for such a task. Then Johnny declared that he would tell about it, and we was very glad to give ear to him, for there'd been such a lot of talk during the night that most of us was pretty well chucked, and all so thirsty as dormice.

"Your grandfather, William Glubb, lived at Bonehill fifty year agone," began Rowland, speaking to Samuel Bonus.

"Master Slade Smerdon was farming Bonehill in them days, and there he dwelt o' the north side of the hill, with Chinkwell and Bel tors towering up above the farm and the fields; and on the south side was they two cottages, still standing, though 'tis time they was pulled down.

"Billy Glubb and his wife and darter

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lived in one cottage, and Elias Bonus dwelt in t'other with his widowed mother. Mrs. Glubb and her darter, Selina, did chores round the countryside, and worked mighty hard to keep themselves and your good-for-nought grandfather. 'Tis no reflection on you, Samuel, that he was a good-for-nought; but truth's truth, and 'tis well within the truth to say that a more useless, selfish man than Billy never lived on the labours of two devoted women. I call him a man, but, in a manner of speaking, he never growed to manhood. All for sport, almost to his dying hour, as you shall hear—all for killing of fish and birds and beasts. In fact, he held a day ill spent on which he hadn't put an end to something. 'Twas in his blood to shed blood, you might say; and if he'd been rich, no doubt he'd have been a very famous sportsman, and high in esteem as a light for the young men, and a fine old English gentleman, and so on; but, being poor as a coot, he was just a baggering, old, worthless poacher, and a disgrace to Widecombe, and a thorn in the side of every justice of the peace and gamekeeper and water-bailiff for ten mile round. A very clever man, mind you. I'm not saying anything against his cleverness—far from it. A wonnerful shotsman and a great fisherman also; but they was ornaments of skill for a rich man, as could afford to be useless in the world; and if Billy had stuck to his thatching instead of his poaching, it would have been a properer way of life for him, and spared his women many a heartache and hunger. For he was a very skilful chap with straw; he'd larned in the old school, and his thatch would stand to weather in a way thatch don't do now.

"Next door to the Glubbs lived a very different sort of a man, and that was Elias Bonus. He worked for Mr. Smerdon at Bonehill Farm, over the way, and toiled early, and late took rest. A very upright man, as didn't know the barrel of a gun from the stock, and didn't want to. Not but what he took his innocent pleasures, and enjoyed his bachelor life in a quiet way. In fact, he kept cavies and pigeons, and his cavies had took a good few first prizes at the shows round about, and his homing pigeons had won a fly or two. An intelligent, church-going young fellow, with a sulky temper; but a man as loved work and could be trusted out of his master's sight. Slade Smerdon's right hand he had become; in fact, 'twas well known that farmer intended to lift Bonus up to be his head man, so soon as ever old Charlie Balsam gave up or died. Elias had a nasty temper when he was crossed, however, and he loved money out of reason.

"So there it was. Bonus and his mother lived in the top cottage, and Billy Glubb and Sarah Glubb and Selina Glubb, their darter, lived in the bottom one. But though neighbours, they wasn't friends, and the Bonus people sniffed at the Glubbs, though old Mrs. Bonus always thought kindly of the women and pitied them. However, they weren't the sort to stand pity, and they snubbed her; and when the pigeons of Elias came down in the Glubbs' garden patch, they was hustled off short and sharp; and then Billy said in the bar of the Rugglestone Inn that a man who could keep guinea-pigs, like Elias did, wasn't much better than a guinea-pig himself. It got back to Elias, and he was very much upset about it, and after that the families didn't know each other, and wouldn't so much as change the time of day when they passed by.

"Then old Mrs. Bonus died, and the Glubbs offered the hand of friendship to the lonely man, and sent a wreath of daffadowndillies to the funeral. But Elias flung the wreath out in the road, under Selina Glubb's very nose, on the morning of the funeral—an action no sorrow could excuse, I'm sure. And Billy swore he'd be even with him, if he had to wait a hundred year. But Elias kept on at the old cottage, and he was thought to be a snug man for one not above thirty-five. Then old Charlie Balsam, being now up home seventy-six years of age, retired to the almshouse, and Elias rose to be first at Bonehill. And then Billy Glubb hisself came to his latter end and found hisself bound on the long journey.

"'Twas the month of May, and Billy had got down in the woods where Webburn runs into Dart. Of course, he hadn't a shadow of business there, but in his dirt-coloured clothes he made it a boast that he could sneak anywhere and be no more seen than a fox in the October brake fern. He fished with the natural fly, and was twice a poacher, you might say, for the natural fly weren't allowed in them waters, and, of course, they was private save to ticket-holders. But William had the day of his life, notwithstanding, and killed six dozen of the heaviest fish he'd handled for ten year. Half-pounders was common as fingerlings that morning, and he'd got one pound fish also. In fact, 'twas a great adventure altogether for the old man, and he'd have come well out of it but for an accident after

dusk was down in the evening. He waited till then, so that he might get away from the woods unseen: but in the dimpsy light he missed his footing and falled in a pool very near to his neck.

"To Pondsworthy he went in a dripping state, and got some hot drink and bided talking for a bit. Then he lighted his pipe and set off to tramp home with his great load of fish. He knowed a market to Newton Abbot, and meant taking 'em there at sun-up the next morning. But afore that he was laid low with trouble in the tubes, and next day he had to see the doctor. Though wonderful young and boyish for his years, Billy was sixty-five at the least, and the doctor said he must be terrible careful and bide home for a bit.

"Which he did do; but the mischief very soon growed, and went from bad to worse, till in two days' time the man found himself faced with death. He was very sporting about it, and took a lot of interest in where they was going to put him, and axed for a certain spot in the churchyard, where the plovers often fed. 'I'd like to think they was running over me,' he said; 'but don't you let 'em lay me to the north of the church tower, my dears, because the moles be got in the ground something shocking, and I wouldn't have 'em burrowing round about me, and me at their mercy down there. There's strange powers in Nature, as we never can understand,' said old Glubb; 'and they might know about the scores o' dozens of 'em I've catched to make moleskin waistcoats and such-like!'

"He kept up his strength wonderful, and his wife and daughter nursed him. Then there came a day, near the end, when Billy, fancying hisself a thought stronger, got a craving to be at his old games. Mrs. Glubb was out at the time when the ruling passion of the man flickered up in this queer fashion; but his daughter, Selina, sat along with him, and she was 'mazed to hear her father suddenly whisper—

"'I want to kill something, my dear; I do terrible want to kill something afore I die!' She begged him to bide still, but not he! The idea, once in his mind, took possession of the man, and he growed fretful and worried. He made her fetch his gun and a cartridge; and then he loaded and handled the weapon, and poor Selina, as thought his wits was wandering, and small wonder, feared, since there weren't nothing else to kill, whether perhaps he mightn't want to shoot her. But she was a plucky, strong creature, with a fine nerve, and she weren't frighted—only terrible worried and wishful her mother would come home along afore any harm was done.

"Billy's bed faced the winder, and now nought would do but Selina must throw it open.

"'Thickey elm do rise right in the line of fire,' says the man, 'and by good hap something be sure to light in it if I wait a bit—a starling, very like, or a grey bird. Prop me up higher and keep clear of the way.'

"She did as he bade her, and old Billy pulled hisself together, and the fire of sport flashed in his dim eyes. He lay gasping there, wi' the gun at full cock, waiting for the first thing with wings to perch in the tree. And he hadn't to wait long, neither. While his daughter stood, all in a twitter to feel the cool air getting in the room, and after she'd already begged him thrice to let her shut down the winder, there was a sudden clatter of strong wings, and a gert blue pigeon settled 'pon a bough of the tree right in a line with Billy's gun. He woke up on the instant and squinted down the barrel, but he didn't pull afore he'd heard his daughter imploring of him to stop.

"'For the love of goodness, father,' she cried out, 'doan't 'e—doan't 'e kill thickey brave bird! 'Tis Mr. Elias Bonus's far-famed carrier pigeon, what he's took prizes——'

"'Twas then Billy let fly, for the bird was just off, and he hadn't no time to wait. There was a terrible roar and crash, because the gun, exploding like that in the little chamber, made an awful bang and bellow. The place was full of smoke, and Billy, weak as a rat, fell back and very near died upon the instant. But afore he choked, and only got his breath by lifting his shoulders to his ears, he'd said a word.

"'There!' he groans. 'Carrier or no carrier, it can't carry so fast as my gun! And that's payment for our funeral wreath of Lent rosen he flinged in the road! And now I can die in peace. Go and fetch the bird. I want to feel 'un in my hand.'

"Selina went down, to find a neighbour or two and a man in a proper towering rage. The dead carrier was in the hand of its owner, and it never got to Billy's, you may be sure. Bonus was a big, sandy-coloured, red-skinned chap, with a large, bullying voice and manly manner, though he did keep cavies. She found him in a proper hurricane, of course, and as there wasn't nobody else, and he couldn't talk to Billy, he dressed her down with his tongue, and said that the precious

bird was worth five pound, and that five pound he'd have, if it cost him twenty to get it. And many such-like silly things he said, as we all do when our luck's out and we lose our temper. He much wanted to go and give William a bit of his mind, but Selina defied him to do that; so he stood under the sick man's open winder and shouted up rude things, and told Mr. Glubb that he was very glad that he was going to die, and that he'd have five pound out of his widow and orphan, and so on. And when Selina went back, she found Billy much the better for his adventure, and even smiling a bit and quite delighted to hear as the famous carrier pigeon had very near falled on the head of Elias Bonus as he walked beneath.

"He died very peaceful and pleased with hisself twenty-four hour later, and he didn't leave a penny behind him, though 'twas wonderful what a lot of the folk followed him to his last resting-place. And, after all, he had to go where the moles burrowed on the north side of the tower, not where the plovers ran over the graves on the south side.

"And then, one fine day, after 'twas all over, and Billy's gun and things had all been sold to cover funeral expenses, Selina Glubb, she calls at the next-door cottage to see Elias Bonus. They'd heard no more of him nor his pigeon; but Mrs. Glubb and her daughter were the upright, honourable sort, as scorn a debt, and would rather live on snails and watercress than take a straw without paying for it. A strong, black-haired girl was Selina, with dark eyes and a firm mouth and a fearless way. Tall she was and very stout built.

"'I be come about carrier pigeon that father shot the day afore he died,' she said; and the man—an awful obstinate sort where he thought himself wronged—made answer that 'twas well she had done so.

"'I keep my word,' he told her, 'and I was only going to give you till Monday next. 'Tis all in a nutshell. William Glubb, he done a felony and killed my very valuable bird, and 'tis your duty, if you're honest, to pay me the price of it.'

"'My mother and me don't want to larn our duty from you, Mr. Bonus,' she tells him: 'we know all about that. The price of the pigeon be the only question between you and us.'

"He looked at her—closer than he ever had afore—and even in his wrath couldn't help seeing she was a fine piece.

"'The carrier pigeon be worth five pound,' he said, 'and if you don't believe me, you can ax the secretary of the Bovey and District Pigeon Club.'

"'Us be quite willing to believe you,' she answered, 'but unfortunately it won't be none too easy to find all that dollop of money to once. In fact we can't, as you well know. So I'll thank you to let us pay it in instalments. We'm both workers, and your money's safe, but 'twill have to come in bit by bit, if you please.'

"He considered that and got a bit calmer for the moment; but he was still feeling very venomous about his fearful loss, and didn't meet the woman in a kindly spirit.

"'It's got to be paid that way, willy-nilly, no doubt,' he answered her. 'That hookem snivey old devil, your father——'

"'You can leave him!' she snapped out. 'He's gone to answer for himself. And if he did bad, he did good also—a many and many kindly deeds—else why did the people come to his funeral in such a fine rally? You'll do best to say nothing about him—he was worth a hundred of you, anyway—and tell me how we may pay this here five pound, and how long we may stretch it over.'

"'I'll have ten shilling a month out of you,' he answered. 'Yes, I will, and you may thank your stars that you have got to deal with a Christian man, who knows how to forgive them that wrong him. 'Tis offering the other cheek to the smiter, in my opinion, but so it shall be. I'll have ten shilling down the first Monday of every month for ten months; and there ought, in justice, to be a bit over and above for interest also. I order you to come here the first Monday in every month with a golden ten-shilling bit for ten months, Selina Glubb, and if you don't, the law shall do its work.'

"She regarded the man very calm and contemptuous, yet couldn't help feeling how fine he looked in his silly, spiteful anger—the outside of him, I mean, for his temper over the business she very much despised.

"'It shall be as you say, Elias Bonus,' she replied to him. 'The first Monday in every month I'll bring the money to this door. Good morning!'

"'Morning!' he answered very surly, and she turned on her heel and left him.

"'Twas then the fun began, you might say; and the man, his anger gone, grew more and more soft toward the girl. You see, his mother was dead, and it had been brought home to him a good bit, since she



"'Prop me up higher and keep clear of the way.'"

passed away, how terrible wisht a house is without a female therein; and above that, as Selina visited him month by month, he began to count upon her visits and long for 'em, so as he might look in her black eyes at close quarters and hear her strong, steady voice. But between whiles she wouldn't have nothing whatever to do with the man—nothing whatever—just passed him by in the open street as though he wasn't there. He tried terrible hard to do away with the bad impression that he had made, and, after the third ten bob came in, declared that he'd be well content to take five shillings instead of ten for the remaining instalments; but she didn't meet him, and was cold as a cucumber, and haughty too.

"'Me and my mother don't want no mercy from you,' she said. 'We be going through with this, if it takes the clothes off our backs; but you shan't say as we had anything from you, though we *do* know very well as your bird wasn't worth five pound.'

"Then he got angry again. But he'd passed the stage of being angry for long. In a word, he was deep in love with her now; he couldn't sleep by night nor work by day for thinking upon her.

"When she came with the fourth instalment, he implored her to take it back. And when she brought the fifth, he very humbly axed her to marry him and let bygones be bygones.

"She refused, and just went her way as usual. Then, a bit later, he tried again, and when Selina fetched the sixth instalment, he said they'd done all that was needful, and he wasn't going to take another penny. But she overruled him there, and gave him a glimpse of her temper and strength of character.

"'You needn't bleat about that,' she said. 'We be going to do what we said we should do, and if you change your mind, that's nothing to mother and me. You'll have your five pounds, and don't let me hear no more about it.'

"He got his tail between his legs then, and sang small, and tried all he knew to scrape up a friendship with the mother and daughter; but 'twas in vain. They had their own ideas and they had their pride, and they was determined never to be under any shadow of obligation to Elias Bonus.

"On the first Monday of each month, regular as clockwork, Selina knocked at his door after breakfast with the ten shilling; and sometimes she'd leave it and go without a word, and sometimes she'd be a particle more gracious and talk for a minute. But when, at the tenth and last instalment, he axed her to take him again, and she looked in his face and refused as before, something told him that there was still a spark of hope. She stared at him very steady, but didn't speak; but there was a flash in her eyes and a flush on her cheeks, and she just shook her head.

"Upon that he made his great stroke—an action that he'd planned most careful from the time that he'd offered to let her off the bargain, and she and her mother had refused. He took her last half-sovereign, brought out a little chamois leather bag from his trousers pocket, dropped the ten shillings therein, and put the bag in her hand.

"'There!' he cried. 'There, Selina, you precious creature, there's your five pounds—every penny of it! I won't take it. I swear afore Heaven that I will not take it! I've been saving it for you. You're a born wonder, and you've made me properly ashamed, and—and—I love you cruel, Selina, and can't live my life without you! And you wouldn't budge, and now no more won't I, so you've got to take the money first and me second.'

"Then she spoke. She liked him by that time, mind you—in fact, she liked him a lot; but 'twas her turn now, and she let him have what was in her woman's mind.

"'I've heard you, and now you can hear me afore you go to work,' she said. 'You can come to offer for me once a month for the next ten months. I order you to come, though 'tis not likely 'twill be any good. And since Monday morning ban't a clever time for talking, you'll just step in on the first Sunday afternoon in each month, and drink a dish o' tea along with mother and me.'

"With that she was off, and the man sang 'Hallelujah!' no doubt, for when she said 'Sunday and a dish o' tea,' of course he knowed the end was going to be what he looked for and longed for.

"A hard nut she was, though, and despite the fact she was full of love for the man in a month, as she confessed to him after, she kept him waiting till the end, and didn't say 'Yes' afore the tenth offer of marriage. That was your father and mother, Tom Bonus—both gone now. But a very nice man and woman, and very happy together, though their married life didn't run to more'n about five-and-twenty year all told."

THE FATE OF THE "FIRST VENTURE."

By NORMAN DUNCAN.

IT was late in the fall of the year. Days of changeable weather, of wind and snow, of fog and rain, of unseasonable intervals of quiet sunshine, were upon Newfoundland. The predictions of the wiseacres were not implicitly to be trusted; and, at any rate, every forecast was made with a wag of the head that implied a large mental reservation. At sea it was better to proceed with caution. To be prepared for emergencies—to expect the worst, and to be ready for it—was the part of plain common-sense. And young Skipper Samuel Lot was well aware of this.

The *First Venture* lay in dock at St. John's. She was loaded for the home port. The hold was full to the deck, and the deck itself was cumbered with casks and cases, all lashed fast in anticipation of a rough voyage to the north.

It was a miscellaneous cargo—flour, beef, powder and shot, molasses, kerosene, clothing—such necessities, in short, as the fishermen of Deep Harbour required to survive the long winter, such simple comforts as they could afford. For both they depended upon the cargo of the *First Venture* and the skill of the skipper to get it safe into harbour.

She was a trim and stout little fore-and-aft schooner of fifty tons burthen. The viewers had awarded the Government bounty without a quibble. Old John Hullton, the chief of them—a terror to the slipshod master-builders—had frankly said that she was an honest little craft from bowsprit to taffrail. The newspapers had complimented Archibald Lot in black and white which could not be disputed; they had even called him "one of the most progressive merchants of the outports." Nor had they forgotten to add the hope that "in the hands of Samuel Lot, of Deep Harbour, master, the owner's popular son, the new craft will have many and prosperous voyages."

By this praise, of course, both father and son were made to glow from head to foot with happy gratification.

All the *First Venture* wanted was a fair wind out. "She can leg it, father," Skipper Sam said, running his eyes over the tall trim spars of the new craft; "an' once she gets t' sea, she's got ballast enough t' stand up to a sousing breeze. With any sort o' civil weather she ought t' make Deep Harbour in five days."

"But I wouldn't drive her," the cautious Archibald insinuated. "Oh, no, Sammy; it wouldn't be well t' drive her too hard."

Young Skipper Sam laughed.

"'Liza can bide another day without you," Archibald continued, with a wink. "She'd much rather have you come safe than unexpected. Just you be modest enough t' reef the *Venture* when she howls for mercy."

"I'll bargain t' reef her, father," retorted Sammy, heartily clapping the old man on the shoulder, "when I think you would yourself."

"Get out, Sammy!"

Sammy roared.

"No, no, Sammy, I'm not jokin' you. Do you go a bit cautious. Somehow or other, I'm feelin' that—that something might—sort o' happen."

Sammy frowned anxiously. "You've insured her?" he asked.

"Not quite. All I got t' do is take up the papers. But I haven't took them yet. She cost us a good deal t' build, Sammy, an' if we can save the insurance this voyage, why——"

"Save it, then!" said Sammy. "I'll get her home. Anyhow," he added, "it won't be wind or sea that wrecks her."

"Well, Sammy," drawled the old man, "I'll see. You can get under way without mindin' that. When you gets under way, I'll see about insurance. Yes, I'll see."

Again Skipper Sammy put his hand on his father's shoulder. "Don't you worry," said he; "I'll do what I'm able."

"Anyhow, lad," Archibald advised, "you better keep well outside the Chunks."

Sammy got under way at dawn of the next day. It was blowing a stiff breeze—a fine, fresh wind, romping fair to the north-west,

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where, far off, Deep Harbour lay and 'Liza waited.

Archibald Lot was not aboard. There were still duties to be attended to—fish to sell and settlements to make—in the city. Later, he would go by train to Desolate Bay, and thence by the last mail-boat of the season to the home port of Deep Harbour.

From the hill he watched the *First Venture* slip through the narrows and go winding out to sea, and as he turned toward the town, he sighed.

"I wonder," he mused, "what I'd better do about that insurance?"

There was an abrupt change of weather. It came without warning, and there was no hint of apology to the skipper of the *First Venture*. When the schooner was still to the southward of the dangerous Chunks, but approaching them, she was beating laboriously into a violent and capricious head wind. Sammy Lot, giving heed to his father's injunction, kept her well off the group of barren islands—mere rocks, scattered widely, some of them showing their forbidding heads to passing craft, others submerged, as though lying in wait. It would be well to sight them, he knew, that he might better lay his course, but he was bound that no lurking rock should "pick up" his ship.

At dusk it began to snow. What with this thick, blinding cloud driving past, shrouding the face of the sea, and what with the tumultuous waves breaking over her, and what with the roaring gale drowning her lee rail, the *First Venture* was having a rough time of it.

Skipper Sammy, with his hands on the wheel, had the very satisfactory impression, for which he is not to be blamed, that he was "a man." But when at last the *First Venture* began to howl for mercy in no uncertain way, he did not hesitate to waive the wild joy of "driving" for the satisfaction of keeping his spars in the sockets.

"Better call the hands, Tom!" he shouted to the first hand. "We'll reef her."

Tom put his head into the forecastle. The fire in the little round stove was roaring lustily, and the swinging lamp filled the narrow place with warm light.

"Out with you, lads!" Tom cried. "All hands on deck t' reef the mains'l!"

The great sail was obstinate. Ease the schooner as he would, it was still hard for Skipper Sammy's crew of three men and a cook to grasp and confine the canvas. Meanwhile, the schooner lurched along, tossing her head, digging her nose into the frothy waves. A cask on the after-deck broke its lashings, pursued a mad and devastating career fore and aft, and at last went spinning into the sea.

Skipper Sammy hoped that nothing else would get loose above or below. He cast an apprehensive glance into the darkening cloud of snow ahead. There was no promise to be descried. And to leeward the first islands of the Chunks, which had been sighted an hour ago, had disappeared in the night.

"Lively with that mains'l, lads!" Skipper Sammy shouted, lifting his voice above the wind. "We'll reef the fores'l!"

The hands had been intent upon the task in hand; not one had yet smelt smoke. And they continued to wrestle with the obstinate sail, each wishing, heartily enough, to get the dirty-weather job well done, and to return to the comfort of the forecastle.

It was the cook who first paused to sniff; but a gust of wind at that moment bellied his fold of the sail, and he forgot the dawning suspicion in an immediate tussle to reduce the disordered canvas. A few minutes more of desperate work, and the mainsail was securely reefed; but these were supremely momentous intervals — during which, indeed, the fate of the *First Venture* was determined.

"All stowed, sir!" the first hand shouted to the skipper.

"Get at that fores'l, then!" was the order.

With the customary "Aye, aye, sir!" shouted heartily, in the manner of Skipper Sammy's men, the crew ran forward.

Skipper Sammy remembers that the cook tripped and went sprawling into the lee scupper, and that he scrambled out of the water with a laugh.

It was the last laugh aboard the *First Venture*, for the condition of the schooner was then instantly discovered.

She was afire! A cloud of smoke broke from the forecastle and was swept off by the wind. A tongue of red flame flashed upward and expired. Skipper Sammy did not need the cries of terror and warning to inform him. She was afire! And she was not only afire—she was off the Chunks in a gale of wind and snow!

"Aft, here, one o' you!"

When the first hand took the wheel, the skipper plunged into the forecastle. It was a desperate intention. He was back in a moment, singed and gasping. But in that interval he had made out that the forecastle stove, in some violent lurch of the schooner, had broken loose, and had been bandied

about, distributing red coals in every part. He had made out, moreover, that the situation of the schooner was infinitely perilous, if not, indeed, quite beyond hope. The forecastle was all ablaze. In five minutes it would be a furnace.

They were men of heart and strength and ingenuity, and they worked with all their might. But the buckets of water, and the great seas which Skipper Sammy, in desperation, deliberately shipped, made little impression. It was soon evident that the little *First Venture* was doomed.

Meanwhile, the skipper had brought her before the wind, and she was now flying toward the inhospitable Chunks. The skipper was less concerned for his schooner than for the lives of his crew. The ship was already lost; the crew—well, how could the crew survive the rocks and gigantic breakers of the Chunks?

It was the only hope. No small boat could for a moment live in the sea that was running. The schooner must be beached on the Chunks; there was no other refuge. But how beach her? It was a dark night, with the snow flying thick. Was it possible to sight a black, low-lying rock? There was nothing for it but to drive with the wind in the hope of striking. There were many islands; she might strike one.

But would it really be an island, whereon a man might crawl out of reach of the sea? Or would it be a rock swept by the breakers? Chance would determine that. Skipper Sammy was powerless. And would she make the Chunks before she was ablaze from stem to stern? Again, the skipper was powerless; he could do no more than give her all the wind that blew. So he ordered the reefs shaken out—and waited.

"Tom," said the skipper presently, to the first hand, "was it you stowed the cargo?"

"Yes, sir."



"'I wonder,' he mused, 'what I'd better do about that insurance?'"

There was a pause. The crew, gathered aft near the wheel, wondered why the skipper had put the question.

"An' where," the skipper asked quietly, "did you put the powder?"

"For'ard, sir."

"How far for'ard?"

"Fair agin the forecastle bulkhead!"

The appalling significance of this was plain to the crew. The bulkhead was a thin partition dividing the forecastle from the hold.

"Andy," Skipper Sammy drawled, "you better loose the stays'l sheet. She ought t' do better than this." He paused. "Agin the forecastle bulkhead?" he continued. "Tom, you better get the hatch off, an' see what you're able t' do about gettin' them six kegs o' powder out. No, bide here," he added. "Take the wheel, Tom. Men, get that hatch off!"

It was the skipper himself who dropped into the hold. The cargo was packed tight. Heavy barrels of flour, puncheons of molasses, casks of pork and beef, lay between the skipper and the powder. He crawled forward, wriggling in the narrow space between the freight and the deck. No fire had as yet entered the hold, but the place was full of stifling smoke.

It was apparent that the removal of the powder would be the labour of hours, and there were no hours left for labour. The skipper could stand the smoke no longer; he retreated toward the hatch. How long it would be before the fire communicated itself to the cargo—how long it would be before the explosion of six kegs of powder would scatter the wreck of the *First Venture* upon the surface of the sea—no man could tell. But the end was inevitable.

Anxious questions greeted the skipper when again he stood upon the wind-swept deck.

"Close the hatch," said he.

"No chance, sir?"

"No."

The forecastle was already closed. There was no gleam of fire to be seen anywhere. The bitter wind savoured of smoke; nothing else betrayed the schooner's peril.

"Now, get you all back aft!" was the skipper's command. "Keep her head as it points."

When the crew had crept away to the place remotest from the danger point, the skipper went forward to keep a look-out for the rocks and breakers. The burning forecastle was beneath his feet. He could hear the crackling of the fire, and the smoke, rising now more voluminously, troubled his nostrils and throat.

It was pitch dark ahead. There was no blacker shadow of land, no white flash of water, to give him hope. It seemed as though an unbroken expanse of sea lay before the labouring *First Venture*.

But the skipper knew to the contrary. Somewhere in the night into which he stared—somewhere near, and momentarily drawing nearer—lay the Chunks. He wondered if the *First Venture* would strike before the explosion occurred. It must be soon, he knew. The possibility of being off the course did not trouble him.

Soon the seams of the deck began to open. Smoke poured out in thickening clouds; points of light, fast changing to lines of flame, warned the skipper that he must retreat. It was not, however, until heat and smoke and the certain prospect of collapse compelled him, that he joined the crew.

He was not a spectacular hero. When common-sense dictated return, he obeyed without delay and without maudlin complaint.

Without a word he took the wheel from Tom Rook's hands, and without a word he kept the schooner on her course. There was no need of command or advice; every man knew his situation and his duty.

"It can't be long," said the cook.

There was now a glow of red light above the forecastle; the fire was about to break through. It was not hard to surmise that the collapse of the bulkhead was imminent.

"No, sir," the fidgety cook repeated. "it can't be long now."

It seemed long. Minute after minute passed, each of incredible length, while the *First Venture* staggered forward, wildly pitching through the seas. At last the flames broke out of the forecastle and illuminated the deck.

"Not long now!" the cook whimpered. "It *can't* be!"

Nor was it. The *First Venture* struck. She was upon the rocks before the skipper was well aware that breakers lay ahead.

Her bow fell, struck, was lifted, fell again, and fastened itself. The next wave flung the schooner broadside. The third completed the turn. She lay with her head pointing into the wind. Her stern, where the crew stood waiting for the end, rose and fell on the verge of a great breaker. Beyond was a broken cliff, rising to unwashed heights, which the snow had begun to whiten. The

bow was lifted clear of the waves, the stern was awash. A space of white water lay between the schooner and the shore.

The skipper let go his grip on the wheel. There was but one thing to do. Many a skipper had done it before, but never before had there been such a desperate need of haste. The fire still burned lustily, and the forecastle was high out of the water.

"If I can't do it," the skipper shouted, "it's Tom's turn next!"

He had fastened the end of a coil of rope about his waist. Now he stood swaying on the taffrail. By the light of the fire, uncertain and dull, he must act. A moment after the next wave had slipped under the stern, when, in the current, he would reach the rocks just after the wave had broken, he leaped.

The crew waited a long time. Many a glance was cast forward; it seemed to them all, such headway had the fire made, that the six kegs of powder must explode the very next instant. No sign came from the skipper, and no sight of him could be caught. They paid out the rope—and waited. The rope was for a long time loose in their hands.

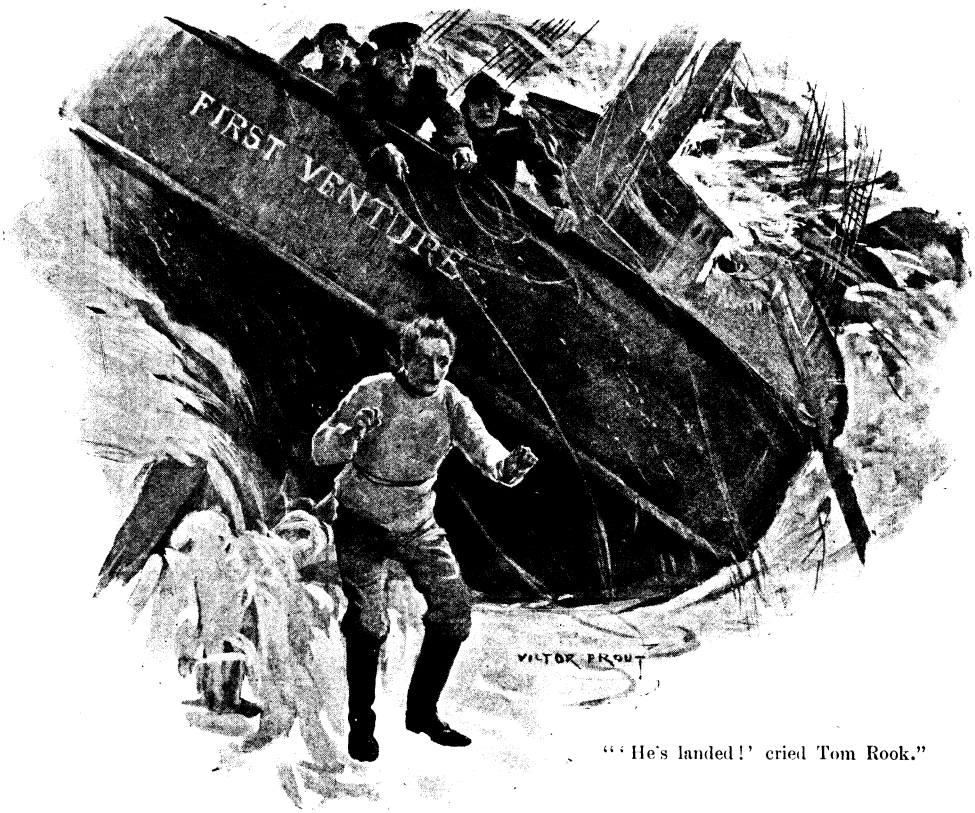
"He's landed!" cried Tom Rook.

The rope was hauled taut. Upon the rocks, out of reach of the sea, the figure of the skipper could be seen.

"One at a time!" Skipper Sammy shouted.

And one at a time they went—decently and in order, like true Newfoundland sailors, Tom Rook, the first hand, the last of all.

When they were all ashore, they scrambled like mad up the cliff, and they were no more



"'He's landed!' cried Tom Rook."

than out of danger when the *First Venture* was blown to atoms. There was a flash, a deafening roar, and darkness, broken only by the spluttering splinters of the little craft. That night, from Heart's Harbour, the folk observed a ship afire, running in toward the Chunks. To the report they sent immediately to St. John's—there happens, fortunately, to be a Government telegraph station at Heart's Harbour—they added, later, that she had blown up. But from St. John's the salvage tug *Hurricane* was despatched into the stormy sea in search of the survivors, and on the

second day following she picked up young Skipper Sammy Lot and his crew.

Sammy's father clapped him on the back when, much to the old man's amazement, the son stepped ashore from the returned *Hurricane*.

"Don't you mind!" said he heartily, before Sammy had had time to explain. "You saved your crew, didn't you?"

"Well, they got ashore."

"No more could they do. An' I'd rather have you save your crew, Sammy b'y, than lose a man an' save the ship."

"But we're ruined!"

"No, not we! You an' me will go down and duplicate them orders for grub an' shop-goods. I 'low the insurance company is good for it. We've lost money, Sammy—no use denyin' that—but we aren't ruined, an' we're both young men yet!"

Whereat Sammy laughed.

"We'll get the grub home by train an' the last mail-boat," said his father. "It wouldn't be proper t' leave the folk o' Deep Harbour t' starve t' death before the winter had well set in."

TO A LITTLE DEAF DOG.

WHAT do you think, dear little friend,
Of the silence that has come?
Why do you think, poor little friend,
The voices loved are dumb?

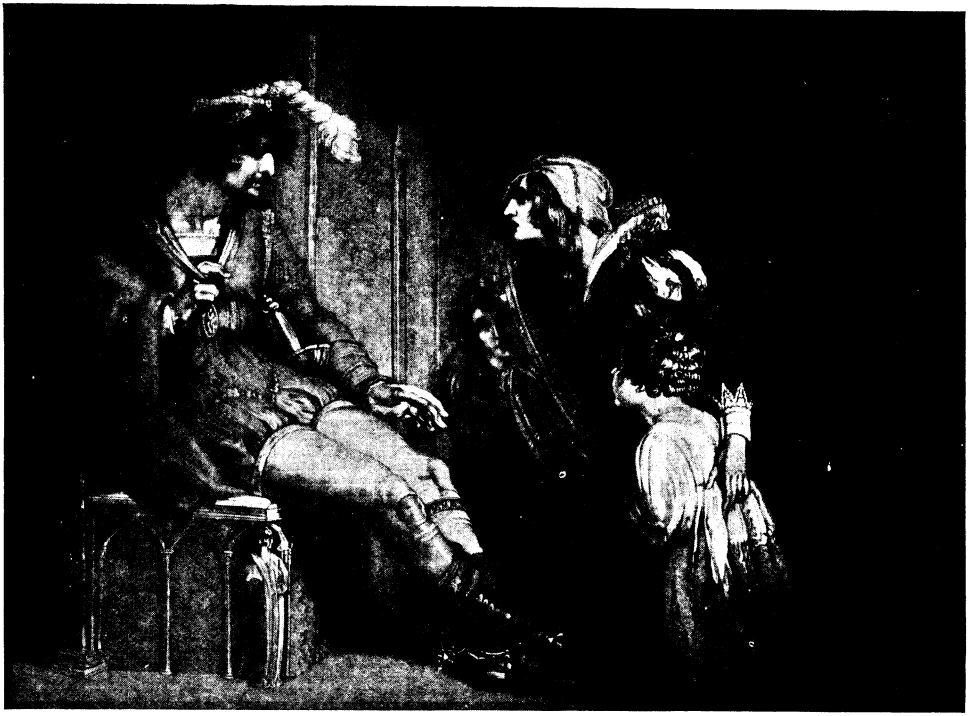
Does the simple creed of perfect love,
That held you firm all through,
Still fill your faithful little life
And make it right for you?

From your deep eyes the same old trust
Beams up into my own,
And from the joy that in them lies,
You do not feel alone.

But when, with head upon my knee,
You gaze so wistfully,
I hope, old man, you understand
The fault lies not in me.

I trust that you, who know so much,
And yet so little, too,
Through your sweet dog philosophy
Know that my love holds true.

E. BREWER DEFOE.



"LADY ELIZABETH GREY PETITIONING EDWARD IV. TO RESTORE HER HUSBAND'S LANDS."
BY RICHARD WESTALL, R.A.

ENGLAND'S STORY IN PORTRAIT AND PICTURE.

XVIII. THE REIGN OF EDWARD IV.

EDWARD IV. represented the elder line of the descendants of Edward III., and therefore, by his accession to the throne, made good the claims of the House of York, which had been constantly used as a party-cry against the younger House of Lancaster ever since Henry IV. usurped the crown of the deposed Richard II. But the York family came into what was undoubtedly its own by all hereditary rights, not through any national desire to do it justice, nor even through any marked superiority to the Lancastrians in the long Wars of the Roses, but chiefly by reason of the incapacity and ill-health of Henry VI., and the unpopular tyranny of his queen and her favourites when they ruled the country in his stead. Had Henry shown but a tithe of the abilities of his heroic father or his clever, if unscrupulous, grandfather, Henry IV., the hereditary claims to the throne of the House of York would have availed nothing.

As it was, Edward was hailed king with acclamation when he entered London in 1461, after the second battle of St. Albans, even though his allies, Warwick and Norfolk, had there been defeated by the royalist army. But the crown as yet sat by no means securely on the head of this twenty-one-year-old Duke of York, for though London recognised him as king, the Lancastrian nobles of the north were still a power to be reckoned with, and still championed the cause of Henry and Margaret. In two minor engagements at Ferrybridge, in Yorkshire, the new king's friends were defeated, but in a pitched battle fought at Towton within a month of his successful entry into London, Edward routed the royal army with tremendous loss to its retreating troops, and the king and queen, with the youthful Prince of Wales, fled for their lives into Scotland.

Edward made a triumphal return to London, and was solemnly crowned at Westminster Abbey. A Bill of Attainder

was passed against all Lancastrians, and in the following year Queen Margaret and her son, unable to find support for further warfare, took refuge in France, while King Henry remained in hiding in Scotland. At the French Court Margaret persuaded Louis XI. to lend both money and troops for her renewal of the struggle for her royal husband's rights, and on her return she rallied a considerable force in the Border country, where she took three castles. Edward led an army against her, and she surrendered the fortresses on condition that several Lancastrian nobles were pardoned

in the hands of the energetic Earl of Warwick and his kinsmen, who had done so much to place him there. For the continuance of the dynasty of York it was now important to negotiate a suitable marriage for the king, and Warwick went on a mission to Savoy, to discuss a union with the Princess Bona, sister-in-law of the French King, Louis XI. But Edward, in the meantime, fell in love with one of his own subjects, the comely young widow of Sir John Grey, and daughter of the widow of the great Duke of Bedford, Jacquetta of Luxemburg, by her second marriage with a Sir Richard Woodville.

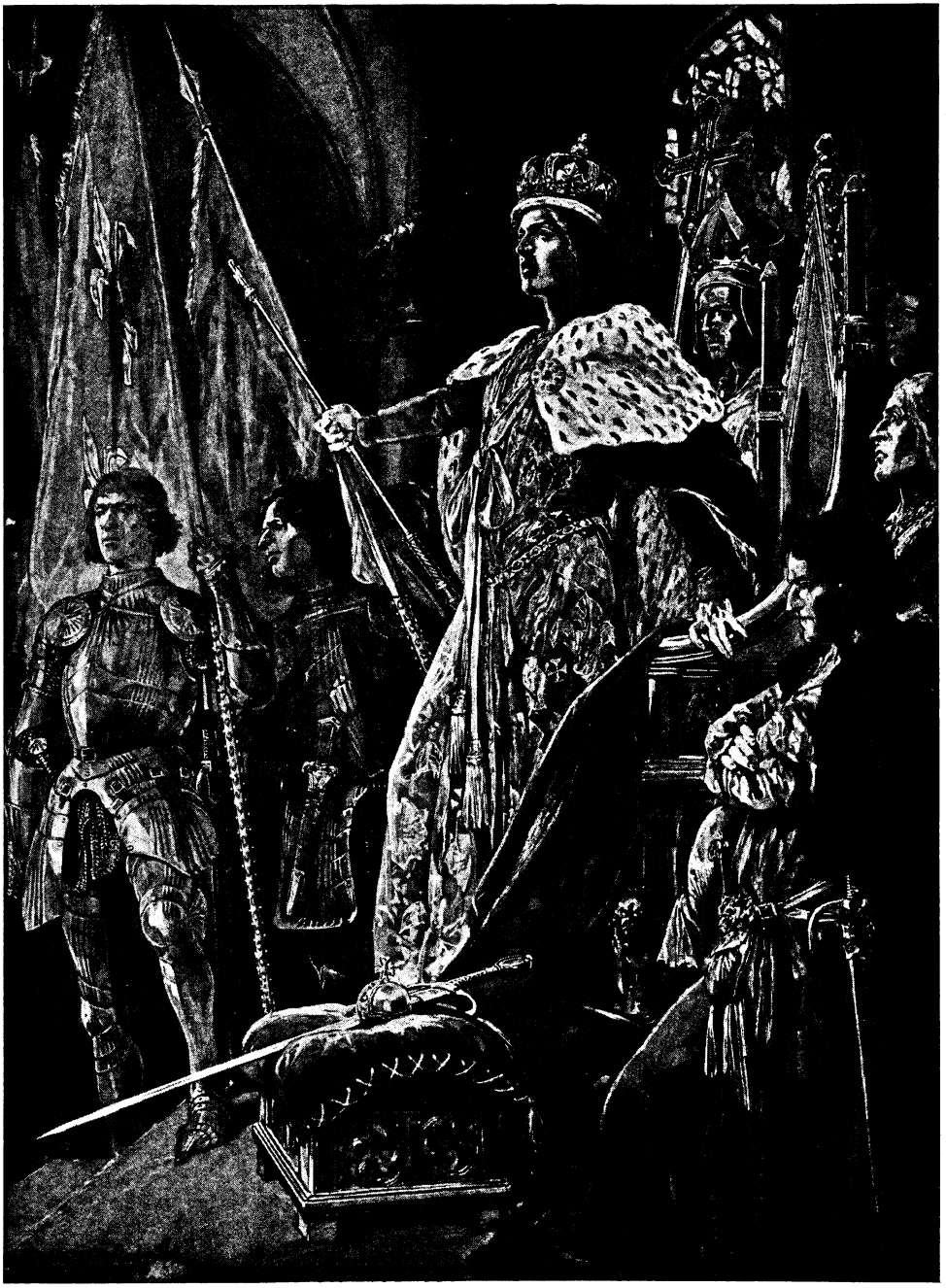


"MARGARET OF ANJOU AND THE ROBBER." BY J. BARRELET.

and their estates restored to them, and Margaret herself left England for Flanders. King Henry found shelter for a time in Wales, and subsequently in Lancashire, but two years later was betrayed into Yorkist hands by a monk, and was promptly consigned to the Tower as a State prisoner.

Edward had early in life shown himself to be an intrepid soldier and a shrewd general, but for statesmanship he had less taste, and once secure on the throne, and all serious Lancastrian rivalry at an end, he seems to have preferred pleasure to politics, and left the government of his realm largely

Elizabeth came to the king to petition for the restoration to herself and her children of the property which her late husband had forfeited by fighting for the Lancastrian cause, and so attracted Edward that he married her in secret in 1464, while the French alliance was still under discussion, although she was not publicly recognised as queen until a year later. After Elizabeth's coronation, her kinsmen were promoted to offices of State with a speed and an amount of favouritism which quickly alienated the king's former supporters among the great nobles, more especially those of the Neville



"EDWARD IV. CROWNED AT WESTMINSTER, 1461." BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.

family, of which the Earl of Warwick was the head. Edward seems to have made conjectural foreign marriages a convenient excuse for sending Warwick abroad, for in 1467 he despatched him to France yet again to arrange a betrothal between Edward's sister, Margaret, and one of the French princes. Yet, without awaiting the results of Warwick's mission, Edward suddenly affianced his sister to the eldest son of the Duke of Burgundy. The influence of Warwick at Court was thus clearly on the

wane; but in 1469 his interests were united with those of the king's brother, the Duke of Clarence, by the marriage of his daughter to that prince, who was already intriguing against his royal brother.

Soon afterwards there broke out, in Yorkshire, a peasant rebellion somewhat similar to those headed by Jack Cade and Wat Tyler in former reigns. Its leader, Robin obliged to retreat before the advancing rebels, had already summoned Warwick and his own brother, the Duke of Clarence, to return from Calais; but when they joined him, they took the high hand, and treated him as though he was their prisoner.

Edward, who had not a sufficient force with him to resist, was taken to Middleham, where he was detained in the custody of



The Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard III.

AN AUDIENCE OF EDWARD IV.

From an illumination in an early manuscript.

of Redesdale, was executed, but the continuance of the insurrection was probably encouraged by the now alienated Warwick. A force sent by the king to quell the rising was defeated at Edgcote, and the queen's father, who had been made Earl Rivers, and her brother, John Woodville, were taken prisoners and put to death at Northampton by the rebel leaders. Edward, who was

Archbishop Neville. Thus, to quote from Lingard, England exhibited at this moment the extraordinary spectacle of two rival kings, each confined in prison, Henry VI. in the Tower, Edward IV. in Yorkshire. In such circumstances, Warwick may have hoped to place his son-in-law, Clarence, on the throne; but all his plans were defeated by the activity of the Lancastrians, who seized the



"EDWARD IV. WITHHELD BY ECCLESIASTICS FROM PURSUING LANCASTRIAN FUGITIVES INTO A CHURCH." BY RICHARD BURCHETT.

opportunity to unfurl the standard of Henry in the marches of Scotland, under Sir Humphrey Neville. The conduct of Warwick proved inconsistent with the suspicions previously entertained of his acting in concert with the Lancastrians. He summoned all the lieges of Edward to oppose the rebels; but the summons was disregarded, and men refused to fight in defence of a prince of whose fate they were ignorant. He therefore found it necessary to exhibit the king in public at York, having first obtained from him a grant of the office of justiciary of South Wales and of all the other dignities held by the late Earl of Pembroke. From York he marched into the north, defeated the Lancastrians, and conducted their leader to Edward, by whom he was condemned to lose his head on the scaffold. By what arguments or promises the king procured his liberty is not definitely known. A private treaty was signed, Edward repaired to the capital, accompanied by several lords of the party, and a council of peers was now summoned, in which, after many negotiations, Clarence and his father-in-law condescended to justify their conduct. Edward, with apparent cheerfulness, accepted their apology, and a general pardon was issued in favour of all persons who had borne arms against the king in the several recent risings.



ELIZABETH WOODVILLE, QUEEN TO EDWARD IV. BY J. W. WRIGHT.

In the spring of 1470, however, a new insurrection broke out in Lincolnshire, headed by Sir Robert Welles, well known as an adherent of Warwick's; yet Edward, though he must have suspected treachery, commissioned Warwick and Clarence to raise troops for its suppression. He himself marched against the rebels, whom he defeated with heavy loss. He then turned promptly against Warwick and Clarence, and proclaimed them traitors. They were compelled, after a short time, to retreat southwards and disband their forces, and soon afterwards repaired to Amboise, where the French Court was then held. Louis XI. invited the exiled Queen Margaret to Amboise, and there a reconciliation was effected between Margaret and Warwick. A marriage was arranged between Warwick's younger daughter, Anne Neville, and Edward, Prince of Wales, and Margaret, Clarence, and Warwick joined forces for the restoration of the captive Henry VI. to the throne.

Edward made but little preparation to meet any invasion by this new alliance, and when Warwick landed in Devonshire with an army of sixty thousand men, in September, 1470, the king's inadequate troops were soon reduced still further by desertion, and Edward was forced to take refuge in Flanders. Warwick marched to London, released Henry VI. from the Tower, and placed him once more upon the throne. Parliament declared Henry king again, and Edward a traitor, and for the next six months Warwick ruled England, with Clarence as his chief supporter.

In March, 1471, however, Edward landed with two thousand troops, supplied by the Duke of Burgundy, at Ravenspur, announcing at first only that he had come to claim his own duchy of York. At Pontefract, Warwick's brother, Montacute, allowed his small force to pass southward. When once he had crossed the Trent, he was in the Yorkist country, and many flocked to his standard. Warwick awaited him near Coventry, but abstained from giving battle because Clarence marched over, with his whole force, to the side of his brother. Edward advanced to London, where he was received with enthusiasm, and then marched forth to meet the Lancastrian army, with which Warwick was advancing along the

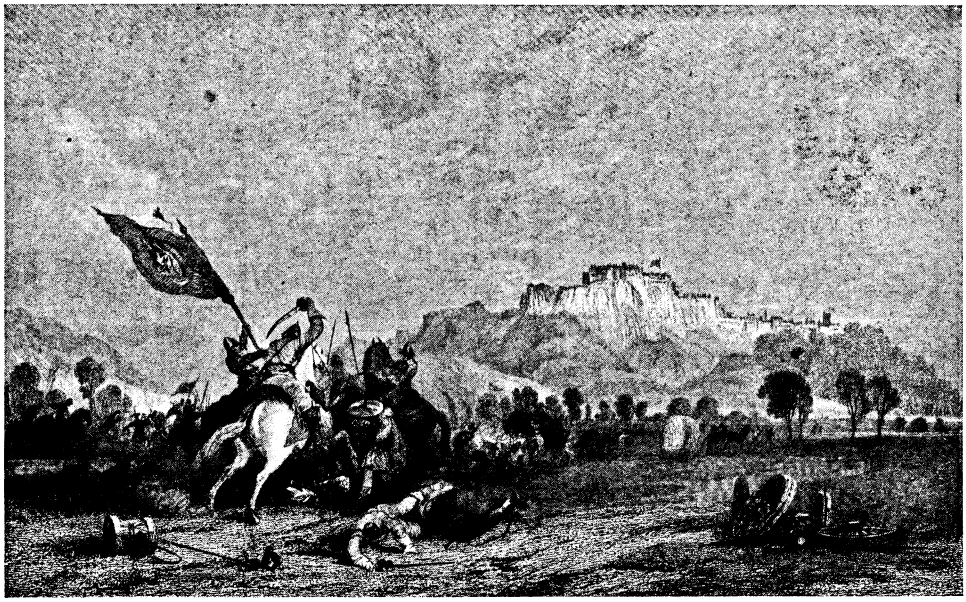


EDWARD IV., KING OF ENGLAND, 1461–1483.

From an engraving by George Vertue.

Great North Road. At Barnet, twelve miles north of the capital, a decisive battle was fought on Easter Day, April 14, 1471, and the victory was won by the Yorkists, the great "king-maker" losing his life on the field.

On the same day on which Edward's victory at Barnet practically ended the long conflict, Queen Margaret, with her son, Prince Edward, and their French troops landed at Weymouth, in ignorance of the blow that was at the moment being dealt to all their hopes. They advanced inland as far as Tewkesbury before being attacked, but there were overtaken by Edward and engaged in what was to prove the final battle of the long Wars of the Roses.



"THE BATTLE OF SAUCHIE-BURN, BEFORE STIRLING CASTLE, 1468." BY T. ALLOM.

A spirited charge by Richard, Duke of Gloucester, seconded by King Edward and Clarence, broke the line of the Lancastrians, and the battle quickly ended in their total defeat and rout. Queen Margaret and Prince Edward were both taken prisoners. The young prince was stabbed to death "by the king's servants," say the contemporary chroniclers, "by the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester," according to the accounts of the Elizabethan writers, Holinshed and Hall. That was on May 4, and less than three weeks later, on the night of Edward's return to London, the deposed Henry VI. was found dead in the Tower. Tradition ascribes his murder to the hand of the Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard III. Shakespeare accepted this story of the hapless Henry's end, but we have no actual facts to vouch for it.

The White Rose of York had triumphed over the Red Rose of Lancaster, and Edward IV. found himself not only securely established upon the throne, but in a stronger position of royal authority than most of his predecessors in English monarchy, owing to the decimating of the great nobles by the long civil war. Had he been gifted with real genius for sovereignty, he might have made the rest of his reign very notable in history; but in spite of popular qualities of personal charm and soldierly courage, and in spite, also, of his creditable patronage of the arts, including the introduction of printing by William Caxton, Edward remained too much addicted to ease and self-indulgence to become a great monarch.

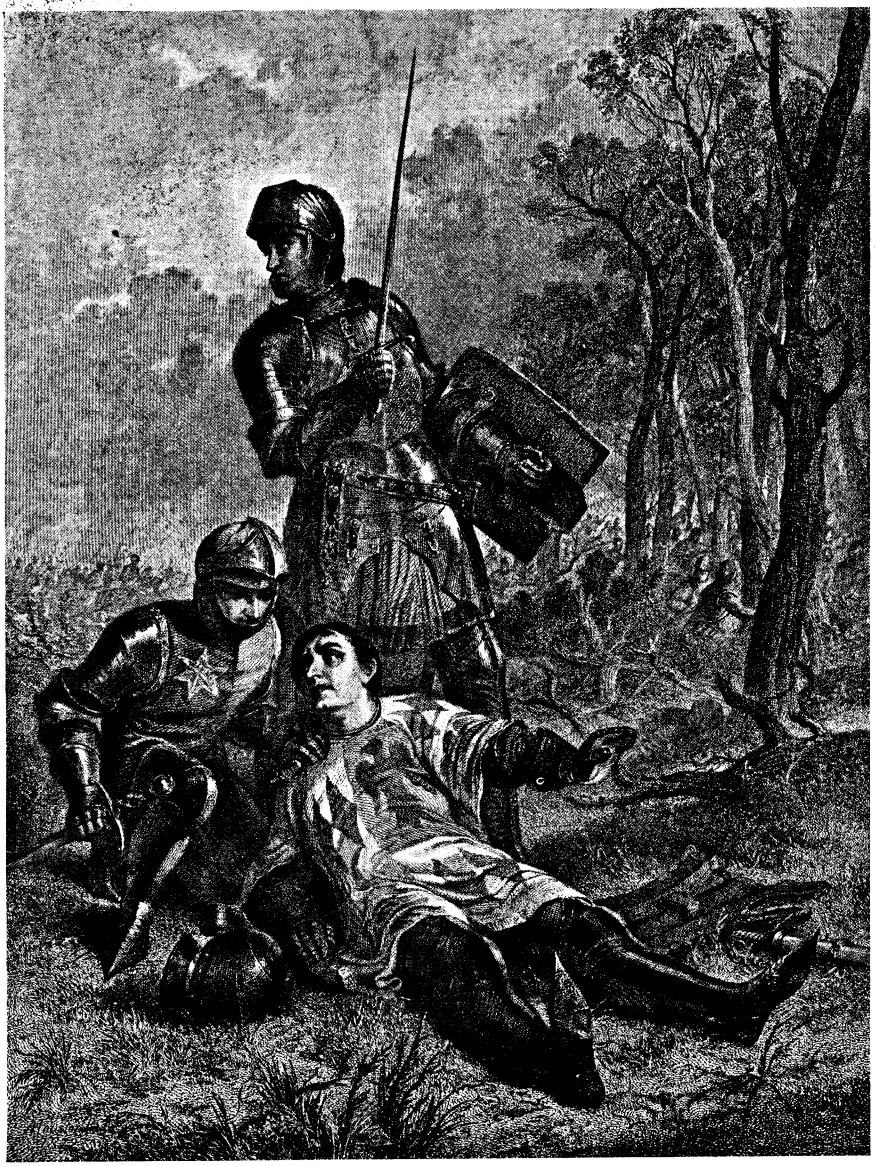
The first use that he made of his secure position, after the end of the war, was to collect large grants of money voted to him by Parliament, and many minor "benevolences" as well, ostensibly for the financing of an expedition into France for the purpose of recovering Guienne and the other provinces that had once belonged to England. He even went further, and, after forming an alliance with Burgundy, protested the right of his predecessors to the crown of France



"EDWARD IV. VISITING CAXTON'S PRINTING-OFFICE AT WESTMINSTER, 1471." FROM THE PICTURE BY DANIEL MACLISE, R.A.

on the grounds urged by Edward III. and Henry V. In 1475, accordingly, an English force once more landed on French soil to make good these now time-honoured claims; but Edward quickly met a check, for the Duke of Burgundy failed to join him with reinforcements as promised, and the English King found it politic to entertain the pacific overtures of Louis XI.

At the town of Pecquigny a strong barrier or grating was erected across the centre of the bridge over the Somme, and to this the two kings advanced to make their terms with each other through the interstices. Seventy-five thousand crowns paid down, and an annuity of fifty thousand to Edward, with a further stipulation that the Dauphin Charles should marry a daughter of Edward,



"THE DEATH OF WARWICK, 'THE KING-MAKER,' IN THE BATTLE OF BARNET, 1471." BY J. A. HOUSTON.

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constituted the price at which the astute French monarch bought a truce of seven years; and, in addition to this, Louis consented to pay a ransom of fifty thousand crowns for the release of Margaret of Anjou, who had spent the past four years as a State prisoner at Edward's Court.

After Edward's return home, he became involved in the intrigues for self-aggrandisement of his brother Clarence, on the one hand, and the crafty ambitions of that other brother, Gloucester, afterwards to be known to history as Richard III. Both these younger brothers of the king had married daughters of the great Warwick, Richard of Gloucester having wooed and won the Lady Anne after she was left a widow by the death of Prince Edward of Wales at Tewkesbury, as readers of Shakespeare will remember. These two sons-in-law of the great "king-maker" had already quarrelled fiercely over his estates, but after the death of the Duchess of Clarence, in 1476, her husband became a suitor for the hand of the heiress, Mary of Burgundy. King Edward viewed with great disfavour any such aggrandisement of his brother on the Continent, and at last resolved on punishing Clarence once and for all for his disloyalties of the past and precluding any possible renewal of them.



"THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, AFTERWARDS RICHARD III., WOOING LADY ANNE NEVILLE, WIDOW OF THE SON OF HENRY VI."
BY J. D. WATSON.

From the picture illustrating the scene in Shakespeare's "Richard III.," reproduced by permission of Messrs. Cassell & Co.

The actual story of his two servants, Thomas Burdett and John Stacey, being accused of seeking to compass the death of the king by magic seems to us, in this twentieth century, but a poor pretext for the unfortunate duke's murder. Clarence defended his men in vain. Burdett was put to death, and Clarence himself was arrested and charged with high treason. He was found guilty, but before the sentence of death was carried out, his death occurred within the Tower, where, if we accept an unauthenticated tradition, he was drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine, according to Shakespeare, by the instructions of his brother, Gloucester, afterwards Richard III. The ensuing years of Edward's reign brought foreign complications, arising out of his ambitious matrimonial schemes for his youthful sons and daughters, and the renewal of war with Scotland, which

led to little result, and is interesting chiefly as showing the growth in military reputation and consequent popularity of the king's brother, Richard of Gloucester, to whom the now indolent Edward entrusted the command. Edward died on April 9, 1483, in his forty-second year. The varying events of his reign, with the fluctuating successes of Lancaster and York, scarcely admit of compression within the limits of our present scheme, but a lucid picture of the period may be found in the interesting monograph on Edward IV., by Mr. Laurence Stratford, which was published only a few months ago by Messrs. Pitman.

In Edward, more than in most monarchs, is shown what Walter Pater has called "the irony of kingship—average human nature flung with a wonderfully pathetic effect into the vortex of great events." There was in the character of Edward IV. little which, in a private individual, would have forced itself upon men's attention, apart from a certain soldierly capacity, some intelligence on the commercial problems of the period, and the ability to turn his personal popularity to good account in maintaining law and order. Such good qualities were obscured, as his life advanced, by unscrupulous cruelty and selfishness, together with a very plentiful lack of morality. Nevertheless, as Mr. Stratford says, "the fact remains that he succeeded in doing what England needed and England wished. And what he did paved the way for others. Henry VII., during the first years of his reign, administered Edward's system. The despotic and autocratic method was carried on into the Tudor system. On it was built the remarkable work of the sixteenth century."

But space for any further estimate of England as the fourth Edward left it, after his twenty-two years' reign, must be found in our next article.



"CHOOSING THE TWO SYMBOLS FOR THE WARS OF THE ROSES." BY JOSIAH BOYDELL.

The tradition goes that Richard, Duke of York, plucked a white rose in the Temple Gardens, to be the symbol of his party's strife against the Lancastrians, on whose behalf the Duke of Somerset then gathered a red rose.

THE DESERT SHIP

By FRED M. WHITE.

FELTHAM smote the chart lying on the bark of a fallen mimosa angrily.

"We've made no mistake, Hilton," he said; "it's that infernal chart that's wrong. I'll back my instruments against any that ever came out of Greenwich. I've figured out our position to an inch. According to mathematical formula, we should now be sailing over eighty fathoms of water. We should be within a mile of the treasure ship. As it is, we are two leagues from the sea, and on firm, hard ground whichever way we go."

"It's certainly very exasperating," George Hilton murmured.

"It's maddening!" Feltham went on. "Who ever heard of a ship in the middle of an island? These treasure ships are never found except in a boy's story, though a good many fools like ourselves have sunk hard money looking for them. But, dash it all, one *does* expect to find the ocean where the ship has gone down—not a solid chunk of land like this!"

Hilton murmured something to the effect that he gave it up. He and Reggie Feltham had been unfortunate from the first. They had embarked every penny they could rake together in this venture of the sunken treasure, inspired in the first instance by an old chart and cipher, which had originally been in the possession of Admiral Sir Amyas Feltham, in the good old days when the Spanish Main had been the field, so to speak, of considerable profit to Elizabethan commanders. The founder of the Feltham fortunes, regarded in the light of romance, was a picturesque figure enough, but he had been a murderous old pirate, all the same. He left behind him considerable property, and *inter alia* the cipher and chart that was the cause of all the present mischief.

Unhappily, the march of civilisation was responsible for a generation that looked coldly upon the profession of buccaneering, and of recent years the Feltham fortunes had waned. There was very little now beyond the old family mansion and the old family pride. So when it had occurred to George Hilton to ask the head of the house for the hand of his daughter Alys, there had been what the early dramatists called "alarums and excursions," followed by the disgrace of a young couple and a tearful parting under one of the hundred and fifty oaks in which Charles II. is supposed to have hidden himself upon occasion—not necessarily Boscobel.

George Hilton was young, he was in love, he had the command of two thousand pounds, plus expectations from a distant—a very distant—relative. Here was a chance to show Alys and Sir Gregory Feltham what he was made of. He had seen the cipher and the chart, to question which, at Feltham Court, was flat blasphemy. The mere suggestion of the scheme was sufficient for Reggie Feltham. Anything was better than loafing about at home with hardly the price of a gun licence in his pocket. It was all very well to have the old house and all that lovely furniture, to say nothing of the pictures, but it was impossible to live on the contemplation of those treasures.

They started out filled with ambitious dreams and high spirits. They had learnt everything there was to learn, short of experience itself, but misfortune had dogged them from the first. They had been robbed right and left, and finally deserted by a rascally crew. Within a few leagues of their destination, their cutter had drifted on to a reef and became a total wreck, and they had been hard put to it to save their skins. And here they were on the very spot at last, only to find that, in the place of eighty fathoms of water, they were practically in the centre of an island!

"There is only one plausible explanation, so far as I can see," Hilton suggested. "The islands here are largely volcanic. There has been an earthquake here within the last century or so, and this island is the result. We shall be able to put the Admiralty chart right, anyway. And no doubt the treasure ship is here all right, only there are about a million tons of solid island on the top of it. We shall shut down the lid on our hopes in

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that direction. The question is, how are we going to get out of this?"

The prospect was not altogether alluring; the Robinson Crusoe element was too strongly marked. There was nothing the matter with the island; the climate was perfect, there were fish and game and fruit in abundance. They had tobacco in their patent collapsible lifeboat, a couple of shot-guns and sporting rifles; their wardrobe was more than sufficient for the moment. Sooner or later a ship would come along and take them off, but that would probably be a matter of months.

"Let's make a survey of the island," Feltham suggested; "we might find gold here."

It was something to do, any rate. Apparently there was no gold, but there were orchids of price, had they only known it, brilliant tropical birds, and plenty of fish in the clear streams. For a mile or two back from the sea, the luxurious vegetation rioted, but beyond that was a strange, arid plain of dry, hot sand, practically covering the whole of the island, giving it a grotesque resemblance to a bald man with a fringe of hair. The sun beat down mercilessly on this forbidding-looking waste, where the sand rolled away to the horizon in long, irregular hollows. A mile or two distant the limb of a dead pine stood out erect and stark, like a warning signpost. The blinding sand radiated heat so that the grey landscape was all quivering. There was no sign of life here; no bird passed in the sky overhead; the whole place was one vast, oppressive silence. Feltham turned from the contemplation of it with a shudder.

"I should go mad if I looked at that for long," he said. "Fancy a desert like that in the midst of a jewel of an island like this! You're right about the earthquake, old chap. That stuff is all baked pretty fine, but it's volcanic, all the same. The whole desert must have been thrown up by some big volcanic disturbance. But how, in the name of Fate, did that solitary pine tree get there? I'd like to find that out."

"Better leave it at that," Hilton suggested —"too much of a nightmare. Look here!"

He strode a step or two across the sand, and turned over a log of wood with his foot. Three or four forbidding-looking land-crabs scuttled out, followed by the shining blackness of a scorpion.

"You can bet that the sand is full of those loathsome beasts," he said. "Still, I am going some day when it is cloudy. We shall be safe with a pair of sea-boots each. I'm not sorry, on the whole, that we've got the island to ourselves; it is just as well. The devil!"

A rifle-shot rang out clear and crisp, and Feltham's panama fell over his left eye. With one accord they dropped flat on a heap of long, dry grass.

"Bit abrupt," Feltham said coolly. "No, I'm not hurt, but it was a pretty near thing. Rather lucky that we brought our guns with us."

They lay there snugly for a moment or two, discussing the situation. Locomotion was not a healthy form of exercise just then. Clearly there was somebody here who resented their intrusion on the island. Hilton began to grow restless.

"Stick up your hat again," he suggested. "Let's try and draw his fire and locate him. If there happens to be more than one of them, I guess and calculate we're in a tight place. If we can get back to the boat in safety, I vote that we change our diggings."

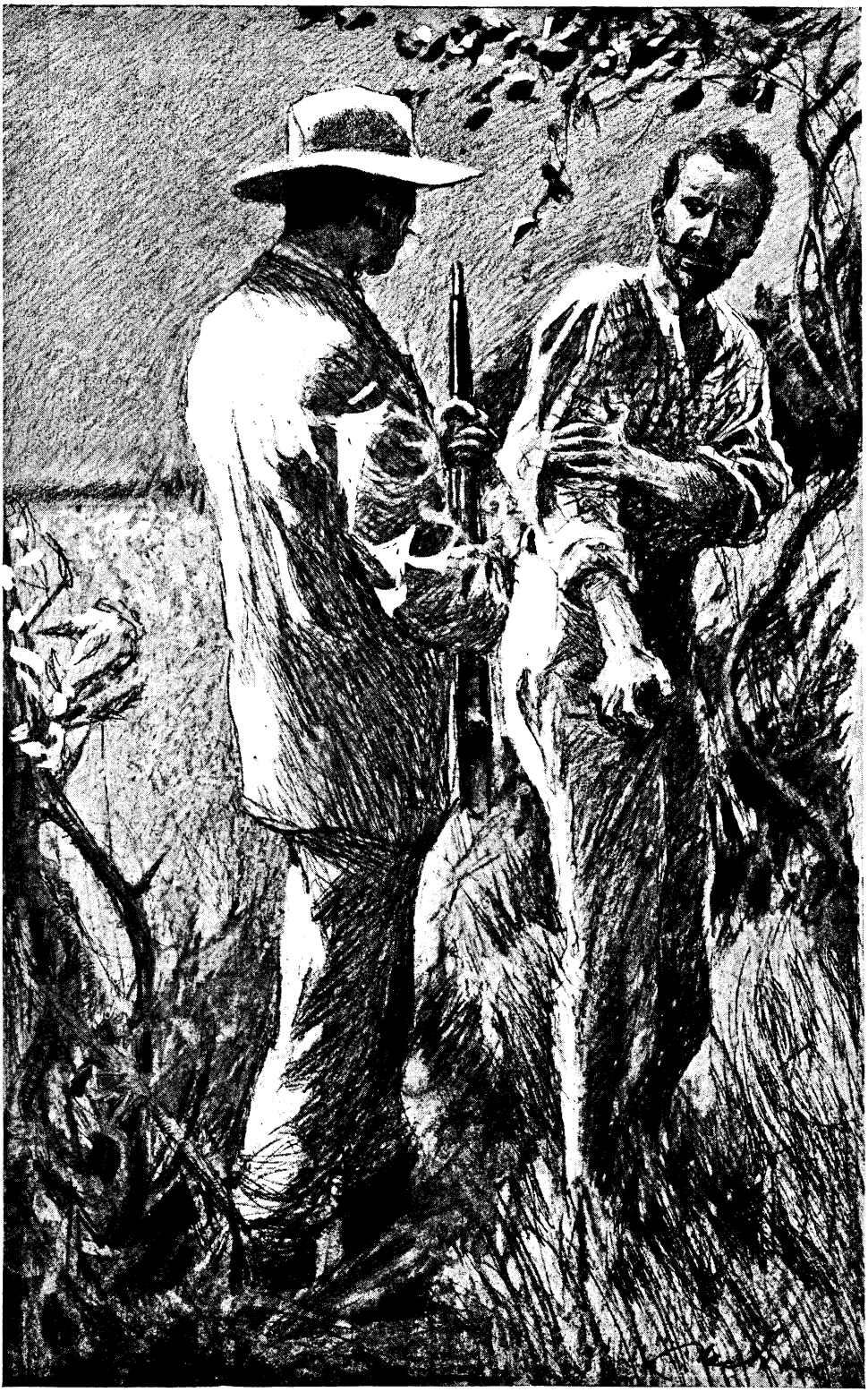
Feltham elevated the perforated panama on a stick. A second later the rifle rang out again, and Hilton popped up his head swiftly. Like a flash he was down again.

"He's over yonder by the mangoes," he said. "You stay here and lie low whilst I stalk the beggar. It's a bit of a risk, but something has to be done. If we stay here, we shall be potted like so many little rabbits. When I tip you our whistle, stick up your hat again. If I can draw his fire, I shall be able to open diplomatic relations with him."

Feltham lay there sweltering on the grass. The blistering heat seemed to be seething his brain. It seemed a long time before he heard the peculiar whistle that he knew so well. He lost no time in lifting his panama; the rifle spoke almost on the instant. Before the echo of it had died away, Hilton stepped from behind a tree with his gun to his shoulder.

"Put up your hands!" he said. He repeated the command in Spanish, and immediately a tall figure rose from a kneeling position and confronted him. There was a rapid motion of the stranger's arm, the hint of a blue-rimmed revolver barrel, but Hilton was too quick for him. His gun spoke, and the right arm of the stranger dropped to his side. Dropping the revolver, he turned, writhing with pain; he showed a fine set of white teeth in a convulsive grin. Strangely enough, his aspect was not wholly unfriendly.

"Call up the rest of the party," Hilton commanded. "Summon the balance of the garrison."



"He turned, writhing with pain."

"I am quite alone, señor," the other said in passable English; "I have no friends here."

"Ah, a passion for solitude—the last thing in the way of Selkirks," Hilton responded. "Passion evidently developed to the verge of monomania. This accounts for your hospitable reception of self and partner. I shouldn't have winged you only you brought it on yourself. I'm afraid I've broken your arm."

Feltham came up at the same moment. He took in the situation at a glance.

"I had to do it," Hilton explained. "Our friend says he is quite alone. Let us introduce ourselves in due form. Reggie, this is Señor Alexander Selkirk."

"I understand," the Spaniard said. "Let the name pass. I prefer it to my own. I came here hoping to be quite alone. For four years nobody has come. To the world I am dead. If they find me, they will put a rope about my neck. In the eyes of the world I committed a great crime; in my eyes it was an act of vengeance. For it I forfeited my good name, my position, my friends. When I saw your boat, I thought that you were the representatives of the law. I said to myself: 'They are from Brazil.' That is why I tried to kill you. I bear no malice."

"That is uncommonly good of you," Feltham said. "We are English, as you see. To be quite candid, we came here hunting for a treasure ship, only to find that this island is unfortunately on the top of it. But you are in considerable pain. Let me help you as far as your house."

A significant smile played over the face of the Spaniard. In spite of his pain he was interested. It seemed almost impossible that he had heard of the treasure ship before.

"I shall be obliged," he said. "You are very kind. I have rude appliances in my hut. My wrist is merely broken, and only needs warm water and a bandage—a splint. Señors, I am in your hands. You are English gentlemen; my secret is safe with you. I am going to show you my hiding-place. Will you be so good as to give me your arm?"

They came at length to a thicket of mimosa, a bush of which the Spaniard pushed aside, and revealed beyond a hut apparently built of ship's timbers. The glass in the windows had undoubtedly been taken from an ancient wreck. Inside was a large sitting-room, with a bedroom beyond. The whole place had a curiously home-like suggestiveness to the Englishmen. There was a tall antique cabinet filled with china, a carved oak sideboard unmistakably Elizabethan, a brass lantern clock on a bracket. The Spaniard appeared to take all this for granted. He produced bandages and a splint. Hot water was to be had from a spring by the side of the hut. Here was proof of the volcanic origin of the island.

"I am obliged to you," the Spaniard murmured, when the rude surgery was finished. "I am feeling a bit faint, so, with your permission, I will retire till the mid-day meal. Meanwhile, it will be a gratification to me that you make yourselves at home here."

"Polite sort of assassin!" Feltham murmured, as he sauntered round the sitting-room. "Equally charmed to bury you or ask you to dinner! Now, I wonder where this fine old furniture came from? It's pretty certain that our pal didn't bring it with him, as he seems to have come here in a hurry. Just cast your eye over those sea-chests. And look at this old compass! It must have come out of a Spanish galleon. Those windows came from the poop of a privateer, I'll swear. It's a million to one that the Spaniard found these things on the island. Did he find the *Sir Amyas* as well?"

Sir Amyas was the missing treasure ship. Hilton replied flippantly, but he was deeply interested, all the same. He stopped suddenly before an ancient brass-bound mirror on the wall, and took from it a miniature. It was the miniature of a girl, painted on ivory with a crystal face. The setting was plain silver, and fitted tightly to the edges of the glass.

"In the name of Heaven, how did this get here?" he said excitedly. "A year ago I saw it at Feltham Court—in the east drawing-room, on the big buhl cabinet. Reggie, it's Alys!"

Feltham turned the miniature over in his hand. The face of his sister was smiling up at him; there was no mistaking her blue eyes and fair, wavy hair. She had a cap upon her head, a wrap of rose point lace was about her shoulders. Something seemed to grip Feltham by the throat.

"You're right," he said huskily. "It's Alys, painted as she appeared dressed for that big fancy dance at the Chantrey two years ago, and in the same old frame I found in one of the attics. Pinch me, George, and let me make sure that I am awake!"

"Oh, you're awake, right enough," Hilton

replied. "I almost wish it was a dream! Now, who is our host, when all is said and done? And why did he lie to us in this way? He must have been in England the last year or so; he must be acquainted with Feltham Court. It is out of the question to suppose that Alys gave him that miniature; he stole it. He—he fell in love with Alys. Reggie, we must force him to explain."

It was certainly a strange situation; there was something almost uncanny about it. Hilton put the little miniature back in its place, and strolled into the open. He was trying to persuade himself that his thoughts were entirely free from jealousy; he was trying to find some logical explanation of this amazing turn of affairs. It was three days later before he got his chance. Feltham was after some rare bird he was anxious to shoot; Hilton and his host were smoking in the shade.

"I am going to ask you a personal question," Hilton said. "You may answer it or not, as you feel inclined. When were you in England last, señor?"

"I have never been in England at all," the Spaniard said quietly.

Hilton lost control of himself for the moment; the hot blood flowed into his face.

"Oh, well," he said, "if you are going to tell me a deliberate lie, I'll go no further! I dare say I can——"

"Stop, señor!" the Spaniard commanded. "You are my guest, and that being the case, why——"

"I beg your pardon," Hilton forced himself to say. "But the proofs of your—your mistake—are so strong that—— Oh, come, señor! If you have never been in England, where did you get Miss Alys Feltham's portrait from—I mean the miniature on the old brass mirror? You have a portrait of Feltham's sister there. We both recognised it instantly. Feltham recognised the old frame as one that he had found. A year ago that miniature was in a drawing-room at Feltham Court."

The Spaniard showed no sign of embarrassment. On the contrary, he was all polite incredulity.

"Is it possible?" he asked. "It is amazing—extraordinary! So the lady is in the flesh? She actually has an existence after all these years? You are jealous of me, señor?"

"I am engaged to the lady," Hilton said, with a touch of red on his face. "Look here!"

On the impulse of the moment he took a metal case from his pocket and opened it. Inside was the cabinet portrait of a young girl with blue eyes and fair, wavy hair. The Spaniard examined it long and carefully. There was something almost tender in his smile.

"You are quite justified," he said at length; "I can pardon your strong language now. And from the bottom of my heart I congratulate you, my friend. It is, indeed, a charming face, with a charming soul in those blue eyes. And behind it is the same lovely creature as the lady who presides over my household. Do you know that I value that miniature highly? I hold conversations with it; I stand the picture on the table as I eat. That beautiful face has a softening influence on me. But I have never been in England, all the same, and my picture never stood in an English drawing-room. It was painted by a man who has been in his grave over three hundred years."

"Still, it is Miss Feltham's likeness," Hilton persisted. "Feltham recognises the frame."

"I am not prepared to deny it," the Spaniard said. "If you compare your portrait with my miniature, you will not find one single point of difference. And if you could take wings and fly back to England now, you would see the miniature you speak of in its place. This is another one."

"But the thing is amazing—inexplicable!" Hilton protested.

"On the contrary, it is capable of the simplest explanation," the Spaniard said gravely. "Now, you and Mr. Feltham are gentlemen. You are out here on some adventure. What that adventure is I am beginning to guess. Mr. Feltham is a man of good family—he comes of a military stock?"

"Naval," Hilton explained. "The founder of the family was Sir Amyas Feltham, a sailor who did some heroic things in the reign of Queen Elizabeth."

"Oh, precisely! We Spaniards suffered at the hands of the English admirals in those days. Did this fine old sailor possess a ship that he called after his own name? Is there no story connected with a wreck and some buried treasure?"

"So you know all about it?" Hilton asked. "As a matter of fact, we are after the treasure. If it belongs to anybody at all, I suppose my friend Feltham has the first claim to it. But this island is on

the top of the treasure, and there is an end of it."

"I fancy not," the Spaniard smiled. "Nature has her own way of arranging these things. Oh, it is a pretty romance altogether! It only needs the touch of the poor but gallant lover and the stern old Puritan father to make it complete."

"Those elements are not lacking," Hilton said grimly. "The Felthams are poor and proud. I also am proud—and poor. But the finding of the *Sir Amyas* is not likely to help us."

The Spaniard rose from his seat and tossed away his cigarette. There was a friendly light in his eyes.

"Come with me," he said. "Put on your sea-boots, and I will don mine. We are going to cross the belt where the scorpions and land-crabs are, to that solitary tree yonder. You will see what the tree really is when we get there. It is not more than an hour's walk."

With the spirit of adventure strong upon him, Hilton strode across the valley of sand. As he came near to the solitary tree, he could see that it was the mast of a ship. In a deep, billowy hollow a quaint old timber ship lay heeled over to starboard. The standing gear had gone years ago, the deck was bent and split, a family of scorpions had taken possession. Down below was all dust and mildew and decay, but the stout old furniture was as good as ever; the brass-work gleamed here and there where the passing dust-storms had scoured it. The figure-head, carved in the form of an admiral in full uniform, grinned down. Some of the carved lettering could still be read. With some little trouble, Hilton could make out the name of *Sir Amyas*.

"There is your treasure ship," the Spaniard said quietly. "Soon after it sank, some great upheaval of Nature lifted it from the bottom of the sea on to this immense area of sand. Gradually the coral island was built up around it. Nobody ever came here. If they did, they would never trouble to investigate this hideous desert. You have solved the problem, and found a ship in a desert. I cleared out most of the sand personally; it found me something to do when I first came here. Bit by bit I furnished my hut from what I found here. Amongst other things I found that miniature. It probably was the wife or daughter of that eminent buccaneer, Sir Amyas Feltham. In old families Nature reproduces herself, and that accounts for the lady of your choice being the image of her ancestress. I can quite imagine your astonishment when you picked up my miniature. If you had not seen it, you would have gone away from the island, and the treasure would have remained hidden."

"So the treasure really exists?" Hilton asked.

"Oh, the treasure is there, right enough," the Spaniard said. "There are gold plate and some gems to the value of perhaps a quarter of a million of your money. It is all yours. I have no need of it; money is a thing that I shall never require again. Only leave me in peace and keep my secret, and there is nothing else that I can ask you. I shall never go back to civilisation again."

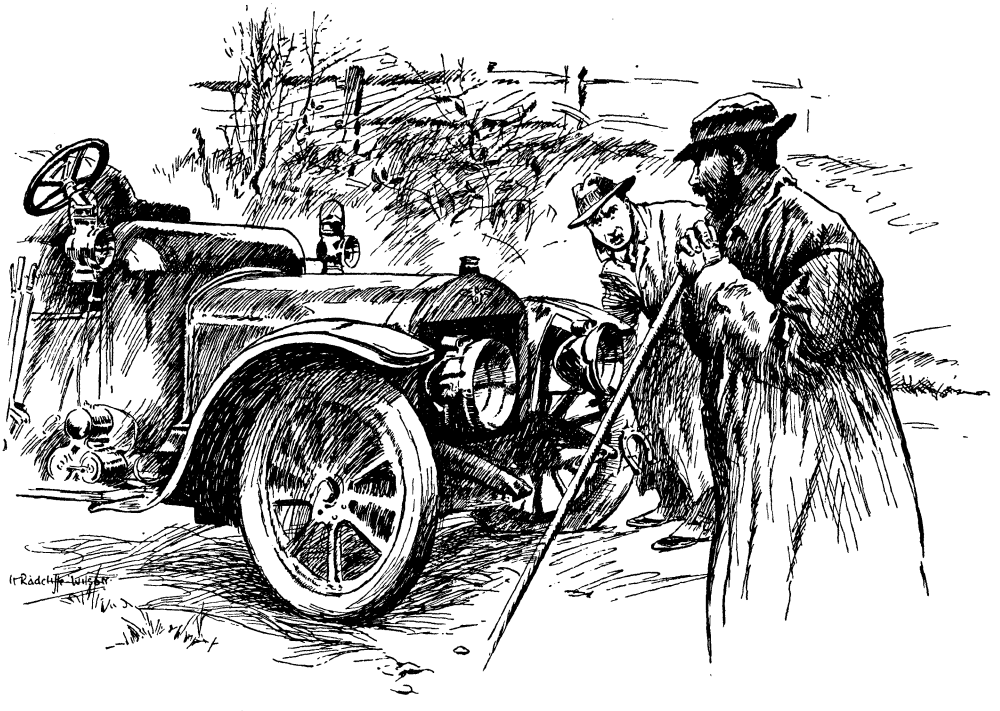
"But this is very princely of you," Hilton protested.

"Not at all. I have no need of money. It may seem a strange thing to say, but I am quite happy here, or, at least, as happy as I shall be on earth again. There is only one favour I have to ask, and that is your permission to retain the miniature. When you come to tell the story to Miss Alys, I am quite sure that she will be pleased for me to retain the picture of her ancestress as souvenir of a most remarkable romance. I am sure that is what she will say."

The Spaniard spoke no more than the truth. The story is known only to three people, and, naturally enough, Mrs. Hilton is one of them.

"I am glad you gave him the picture, George," she said, "and I hope that no harm may come to him. Some of these days, when we get a little tired of our pretty house here, and want a change, I'll get you to take me out there and see the noble Spaniard."

"I'll do it with the greatest possible pleasure," Hilton said promptly.



HOW OLD OPINIONS CHANGE!

ROAD-MENDER: They do say, sir, in these parts, it's lucky to pick up a 'orse-shoe on the road. (Jones is strongly of the opposite opinion.)

THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

A PHYSICIAN came across a patient while strolling through the grounds of a hospital for the insane, and, stopping, spoke to him. After a brief conversation on conventional topics, the physician said—

"Why are you here?"

"Simply a difference of opinion," replied the patient. "I said all men were mad, and all men said I was mad, and the majority won."

"AFTER you've been two weeks in the house with one of these terrible handy men that ask their WIVES to be sure and wipe between the tines of the forks, and that know just how much raising bread ought to have, and how to hang out a wash so each piece will get the best sun, it's a real joy to get back to the ordinary kind of man. Yes, 'tis so!" Mrs. Gregg finished with much emphasis. "I want a man who should have sense about the things he's meant to have sense about, but when it comes to keeping house, I like him real helpless—the way Nature planned to have him!"

AT certain manœuvres the command was given to raise the left leg. One man, however, raised his right. The officer, on observing this, exclaimed: "Which idiot has raised both his legs?"

SAID a critic to an author: "I've read your book. There's a great deal that's true and a great deal that's new." (Delight of author.) "But," added the critic, "that which is *true* is not *new*, and that which is *new* is not *true*."

"FATHER, are there men in the moon?"

"Yes, my child, more than on earth."

"Then how crowded they must be at half-moon!"

PROFESSOR (to his class): Jones, when I am talking about a monkey, you must not look out of the window, but at me.

"O SI SIC OMNES!"
OR, THE HUMBLE CITIZEN.

I am a humble citizen,
Free from the sins of other men:
I do not rail if things go wrong,
But sing instead a merry song.
Why should you grumble at the weather?
I take the foul and fair together;
It does not do to get put out
In August by a waterspout,
My rates with smiling face I pay,
Behindhand never by a day;
I like to contribute my quota
Towards the children's bread and bloater.
If they are washed and educated,
What matters it how high we're rated?
The Income Tax I do not shirk,
But pay my duty like clockwork.
Let others every figure fight,
And never think the assessment right.
I meet it meekly as a lamb—
You see, a patriot I am.
For what can man more noble do
Than help to swell the Revenue?
Though I am but a daily drudge,
I cheerfully to business trudge.
What beauty in a ledger lies
To open and discerning eyes!



WHY IT DID NOT PAY.

FRIEND: Do you try your jokes on your friends before you publish them?
ARTIST: I used to, but I lost too many.
FRIEND: Jokes?
ARTIST: No, friends!



A COMPROMISE.

BROWN: I should like to lend you that fiver, old man, but I know how it would be if I did—it would end our friendship.

JONES: Well, old chap, there has been a great deal of friendship between us. I think, if you could make it two pound ten, we might worry along on half as much.

And if at lunch no waitress comes,
While I sit tight and twirl my thumbs,
And time is limited, do I
Grow wrath for lack of mutton pie?
You know me better than to think
I care a fig for meat or drink.
I never grudge the gold I give
At church to help the clergy live,
Or raise the aborigines
Of islands in lone southern seas;
And if you want to fill a gap,
Behold me handy as a Jap.
At home I'm always bright and jolly,
I don't believe in melancholy;
And with my wife I'm never snappy,
We are so very sweet and happy.
The children like to see me come,
To me they're never troublesome;
I've only one anxiety—
That they may grow up just like me.

Edgar Vine Hall.

THE ignorant young bride was anxious to convince her husband of the amount of domestic knowledge she possessed. When she heard his step in the hall, she called out to the maid: "Now, Sarah, where's the soap? I want to wash the lettuces."

A CERTAIN eminent statesman is said to have remarked to a fellow-politician: "I'm afraid you don't approve of my dealings and the way I am playing my cards at this crisis." The reply was: "It's not your *dealing*, it's the *shuffling* I object to."



AFTER THE SERMON.

CHURCHWARDEN: Would you like to hear what our excellent verger thought of your sermon, my lord?
BISHOP: Very much indeed.
CHURCHWARDEN: I said to him just now, "That was a finished discourse the bishop gave us," and he replied: "It is *now*, but at one time I thought it never *would* be."

"I HAVE found a good way to catch rabbits," said a smart youth to his schoolmaster one day.

"Tell it to me," said the schoolmaster.

"Crouch down behind a stone wall and make a noise like a turnip," said the youth, with a chuckle.

"A better way than that," came the elder's quick retort, "would be for you to go and sit in a bed of cabbage heads and look natural!"

ALL HE SAID.

BELONGING to a whist club was an old fellow who enjoyed the reputation of being a great crank, and his animadversions against his partners were so severe, and his manners generally so bad, that it was seldom that he could get anyone to play with him.

One night, however, a guest was present, whom the avoided one promptly asked to play. The stranger was about to comply, when he was quietly taken aside by one of the members of the club, who told him the reputation of the crank.

"I don't care," he said; "I can stand it."

At the end of the evening he was approached once more by the curious member.

"Well," said the member, "how did you manage?"

"First-rate."

"Didn't he insult you?"

"Why, no."

"Didn't he browbeat you?"

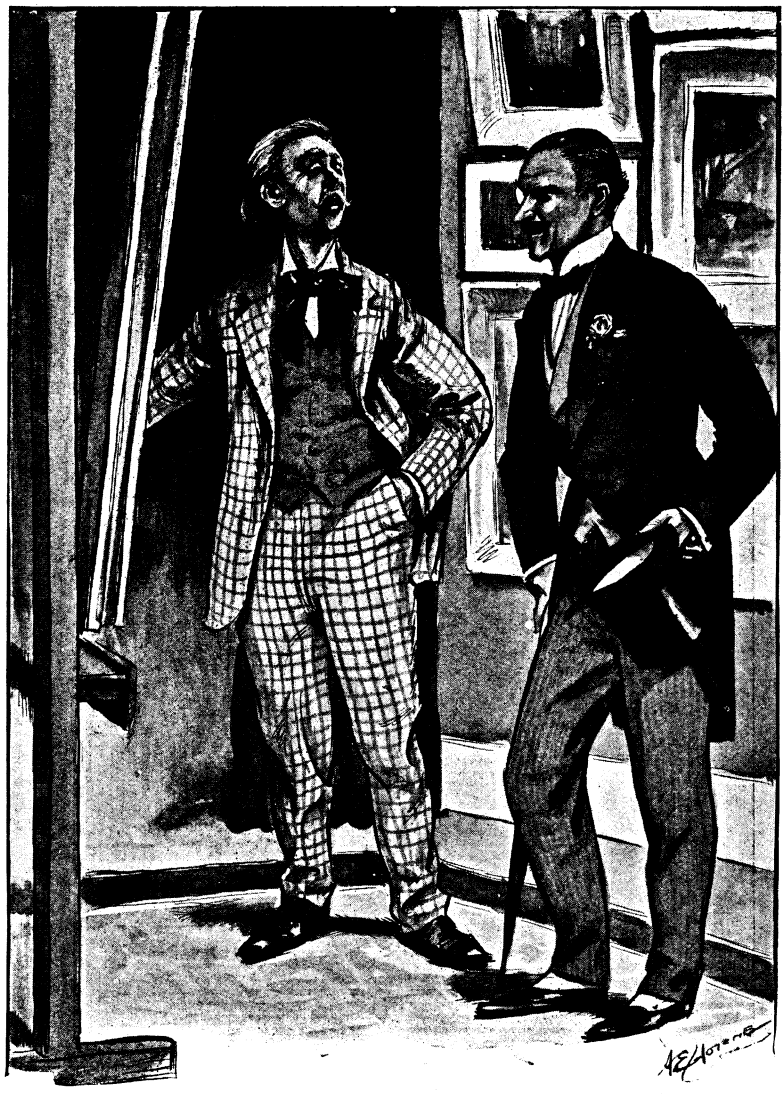
"Not at all."

"Didn't he say *anything?*"

"Nothing special. He only spoke once during the whole course of the game."

"What did he say then?"

"Why, I didn't get the cards out right, and he looked over very pleasantly and said: 'Why, you can't even deal, can you?'"



NOT QUITE WHAT HE MEANT.

ARTIST (who is holding a "one-man show"): As a friend, you can have any picture you fancy at half the catalogue price.

CYNICAL FRIEND: What's the price of the catalogue?

GRATITUDE is the nothing that we give for something. Anything more than that is compensation or restitution or reciprocity. But as most people look upon gratitude as something more than nothing, we are usually dissatisfied with the gratitude we receive, and mistake it for no gratitude at all, and hence we look upon most people as ungrateful.

The best example of pure gratitude is a dog wagging his tail after receiving a bone or a pat or a back-rub. This wag satisfies us because we know it's the best the dog can do.

"YES," said the lady, after an acquaintance of ten or fifteen years before had been renewed, "I remember you perfectly."

"Indeed?" murmured the gratified man.

"Yes, at one time I thought of marrying you."

"Oh," he replies dejectedly, "I thought for the moment that there might have been something that made me different from all the other men you ever knew."

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Facing matter at end

THE PLAGIARIST.

I had penned a didactic poem,
With the best of advice replete,
And as full of the sagest counsel
As an egg is full of meat.
While a friendly critic read it,
My heart beat high with hope;
But, alas, for my pride, when he cheerily cried:
"I can see you have studied Pope!"

So I turned to the Mother Nature,
And babbled of verdant fields,
And the feeling of exultation
A gurgling streamlet yields,
And the sound of the sea in sorrow,
And the voice of the talkative rain—
And my friend's face glowed as he read my ode—
"It is Wordsworth over again!"

It was hard, and I smote in anger
At pettiness, wrong, and strife,
At the folly of playing at cricket,
And the joy of the strenuous life;
And I named in the plainest Saxon
All agricultural tools;
And the people who read looked wise and said:
"He is calling us flannelled fools!"

Then I wrote of the gnawing heartache
To disappointment due,
And the folly of futile striving
To think of something new;
And I used the cynic's weapon,
Depression's depths that probes;
But I stopped, for all my borrowed gall
Was Solomon's or Job's!

A. W. Busbridge.

A VILLAGE dame wrote to a friend and said she was sorry to have kept her waiting so long for a letter, but her feet had been very bad.



PROOF POSITIVE.

"I'M certain my husband never has enough to drink at these great banquets—he's always so thirsty the next morning."

THE new maid-servant up from the country wrote and told her mother that she thought the people she was with must be rather mean, as she had seen two of the young ladies playing on the same piano!

OLD LADY (at the end of the pier, seeing the revolving lamp on the lightship for the first time): Dear me, those sailors must have a lot of patience! Every time the lamp goes out, they light it again!

THE IDEAL HOLIDAY.

When should one visit the Western Highlands of Scotland? Most untravelled people think that at the end of the summer they will find the coast at its best, but those who love the Highlands know better. At no time is the wonderful country more alluring than in May and June; and those who cannot take holiday so early will find July, August, and the first half of September attractive enough.

Granting, then, that the summer tour among the Western Highlands, attractive at all seasons, is specially fascinating in May, June, and early July, what is the best route? Road and rail, coach and canal, serve to gain the coveted spots, but undoubtedly the happiest method is followed by the holiday-maker who books a cabin on a well-appointed steamer that lays itself out to cater for the comfort of passengers.

Such a steamer is the *Princess Alberta*, of 1585 tons, belonging to Messrs. M. Langlands & Sons, Liverpool, and serving the Western Highlands from Liverpool. Between the middle of May and the middle of September this year it will undertake ten Highland trips in accordance with itineraries arranged by people who know the Western Highlands intimately, and have included countless places of which the rare natural beauties are associated with both history and romance. The arrival of the steamer at the chief places of call is timed to establish connection with the season's land excursions, so that those who are not content with the pleasures of the sea travel, and wish to enjoy coaching tours, or to follow the delightful country of the West Highland Railway, or visit far lochs with famous associations, will find the best possible plans mapped out for them. Inveraray and Oban, Islay and Fort William, Glencoe and Arrochar, the Sound of Mull and Loch Torridon—who, having visited these spots once, can fail to be stirred even by the sound of the well-remembered names?

Strange, indeed, that there are so many Britons who, having seen little or nothing of their own land, make haste to spend their summer holidays abroad. They must face many a long and uncomfortable journey to find surroundings that can approach in grandeur and picturesqueness the Western Highlands of Scotland, while, even when the goal is gained, they will find themselves surrounded by people whose language, habits, and customs they neither appreciate nor understand.

There are some who fear the sea, and would hesitate on this account to travel by steamer to any desired haven, but the worst sailor may enjoy such a trip as is outlined so briefly here. It is always possible to cruise in sheltered waters among the Western Highlands, and the captain in charge of the steamer has a wide discretion. If, in spite of the season, the weather should be bad, he will drop certain items in the programme, and will keep to waters that no summer storm can raise to the height of discomfort.

As far as comfort is concerned, the modern steamer that is employed for pleasure trips

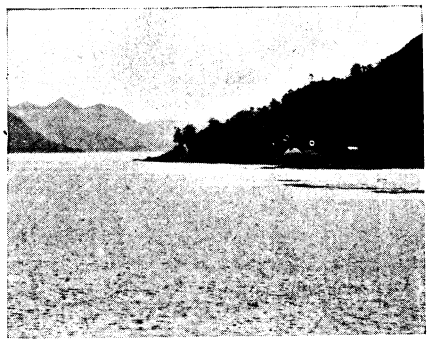
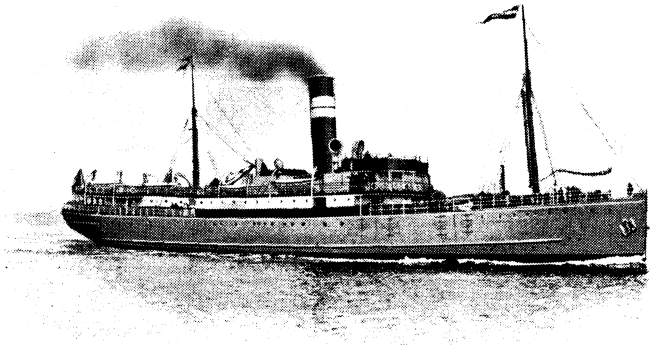


Photo by] [*Ronald Stuart, Liverpool.*

TOTAG, LOCH DUICH.

can challenge comparison with many a well-appointed hotel. The *Princess Alberta*, for example, has a complete installation of electric light, elaborate bath-rooms, luxurious saloons, and a competent *chef*. All the cabins are two or four-berthed state rooms. These luxuries are the necessities of modern travel. They have availed to rob a sea journey of no small part of its old-time terrors, even in the mighty ocean; among the sheltered islands that are visited on the cruise to Western Scotland, they serve to give the journey the quality of a picnic. Illustrated booklets are issued by Messrs. M. Langlands & Sons, Brown's Buildings, Exchange Street West, Liverpool, and can be obtained on application.





A COMFORTABLE ILLUSION.

JOAN (who has an imaginary little brother supposed to live in the hall): Mummy, may little brother have a sweet, too?

MOTHER (laying it on the table): Yes, dear. I'll put it here, and he can come and fetch it.

JOAN (returning): Mummy, little brother says he feels sick, and would rather I ate it.

THE BRITON: I always try to wear clothes to conform to the weather.

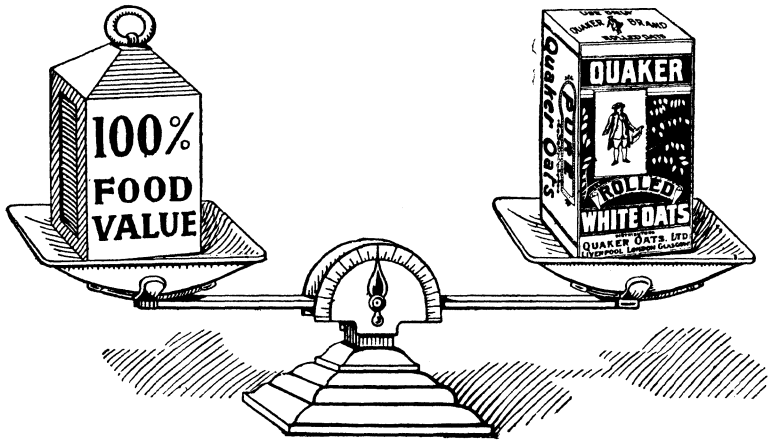
THE FOREIGNER: What are you—a lightning change artist?

SON: What is the meaning of economy?

MOTHER: Economy, my son, is going without something you want in case some day you should want something which you probably won't want to do without.

VISITOR (in aeroplanic apartments): What became of that beautiful little water-spaniel you had on your yacht last summer?

HOSTESS: Oh, he was so unfashionable up here that I exchanged him for a sky-terrier!



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Dr. Robert Hutchison in his standard work, "Food and Dietetics."

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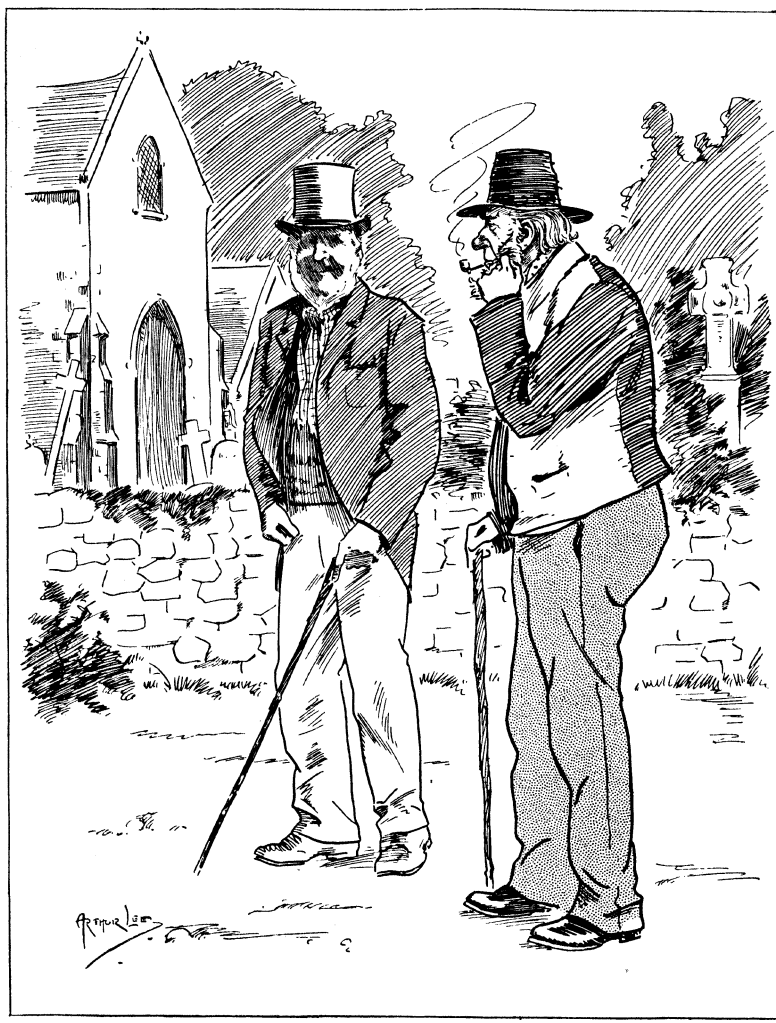
A CERTAIN distinguished American is a good talker to-day, but was not always fluent of speech. Liberal always to religious causes, he was also devout, but unostentatious. He attended week-day prayer-meetings at the Pittsburg Y.M.C.A., and was startled one day when the leader of the meeting said—

"Brother —— will now lead us in prayer."

The visitor was the only man there who knew that it was absolutely impossible. However, he arose and said—

"First of all, let us engage in silent prayer for a few moments."

With closed eyes and bowed heads, the little gathering engaged in silent prayer. But the "few moments" became so long-continued, and the silence so oppressive, that the leader finally looked up to see why the silence was so prolonged, and what the visitor was doing. To his astonishment, he was not there; he had tiptoed out of the room.



A READY RECKONING.

THOMAS: I be forgetting how long it is you've been a widower, Giles?
GILES: Let me see—it must be ever since my old woman died.

THE men were arguing as to who was the greatest inventor. One said Stephenson, who invented the locomotive. Another declared it was the man who invented the compass. Another contended for Edison. Still another for the Wrights.

Finally one of them turned to a little man who had remained silent.

"Who do you think?"

"Well," he said, with a hopeful smile, "the man who invented interest was no fool."

MARK TWAIN once approached a friend, a business man, and confided to him that he needed the assistance of a secretary.

"I can send you one, a fine young fellow," the friend said. "He came to my office yesterday in search of a position, but I hadn't got any opening for him."

"Has he a sense of humour?" Mark Twain asked cautiously.

"A sense of humour? He has—in fact, he got off one or two pretty witty things himself yesterday," the friend hastened to assure him.

"Sorry, but he won't do, then," Mark Twain said.

"Won't do? Why?"

"No," said Twain. "I had one once before with a sense of humour, and it interfered too much with the work. I cannot afford to pay a man two dollars a day for laughing."

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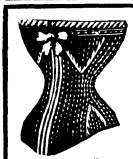
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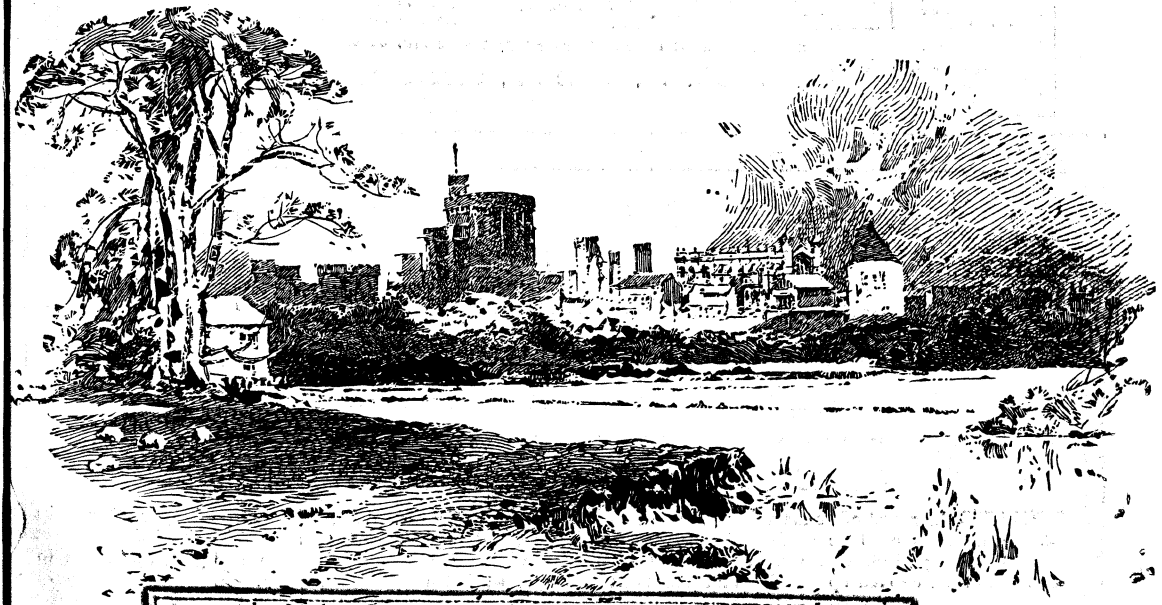
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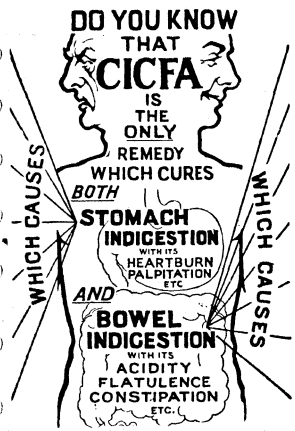
(3) **Acid** in Stomach with Heartburn

(4) **Tongue** coated white all over

(5) **Complexion** blotchy, with Redness of Nose, Spots and Pimples

(6) **Eating** not desired, Vomiting occasionally

(7) **Pains** darting through Chest and Burning Spot between Shoulder Blades



You can eat bread and potatoes with every meal when you take Cicfa.

BOWEL INDIGESTION causes

(1) **Gases in Bowel** or Flatulence

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(4) **Tongue** coated Yellow at back

(5) **Complexion** muddy or pasty

(6) **Eating** disliked or loathed, Biliousness and bad taste in mouth

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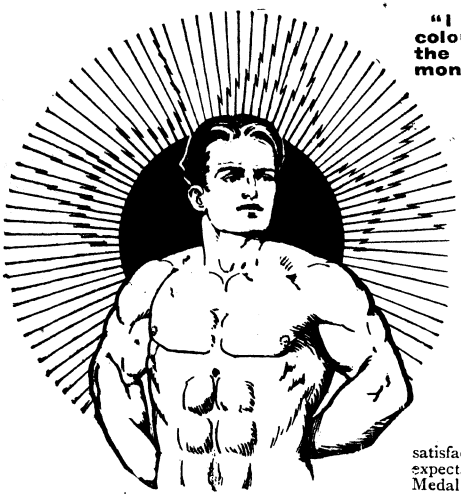
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In over a million homes now you will find men and women making "Harlene Hair-Drill" an important feature of the morning toilet, and thousands whose hair has been gradually growing thinner, or weaker, or more brittle, or losing colour, or suffering from any of the many disorders to which human hair is heir, are to-day returning thanks to the discoverer of "Harlene Hair-Drill" for the restoration of their hair to health and vigour and a beautiful appearance once more.

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Read this article and you will see and understand why you should never attempt to dress your hair by dipping your hair brush in water—especially tap water—as it contains mineral and other matters and solutions which destroy the hair. Further, you can read here how you can obtain a package containing everything you will require to carry out a week's test of a method of taking care of the hair which to-day is used by over a million persons.

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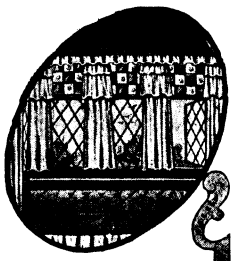
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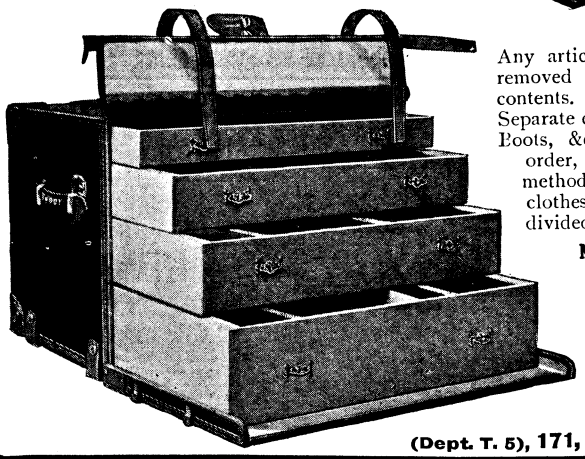
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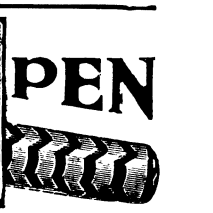
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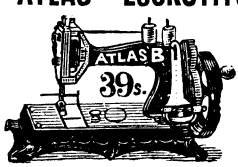


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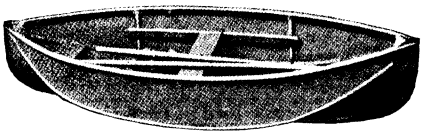
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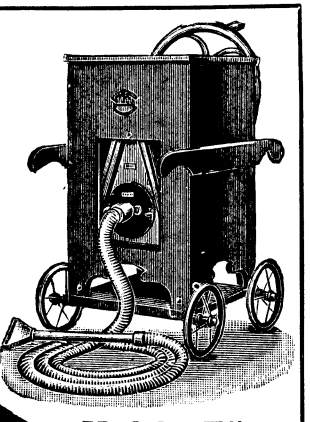
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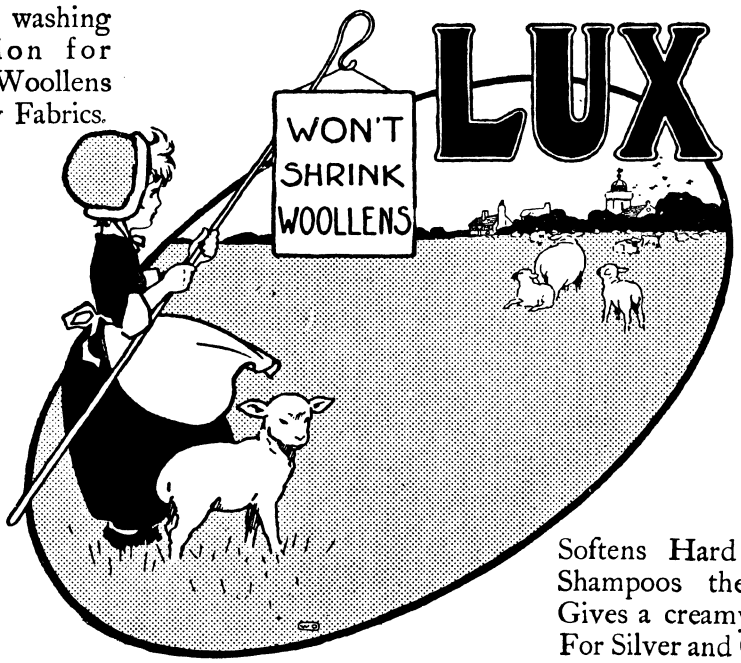
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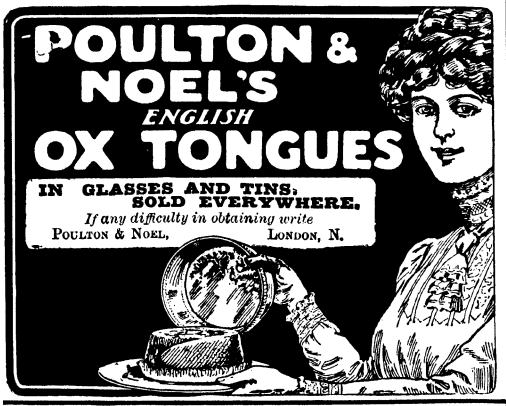
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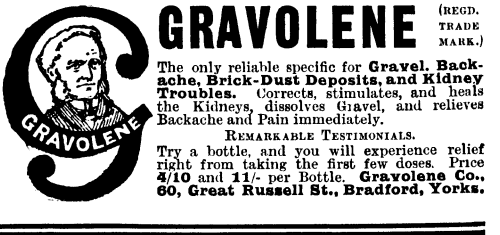
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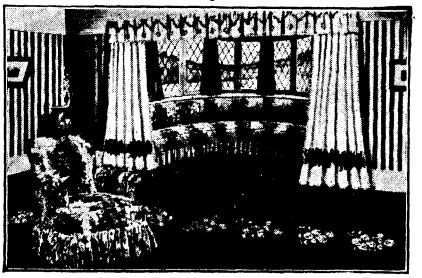
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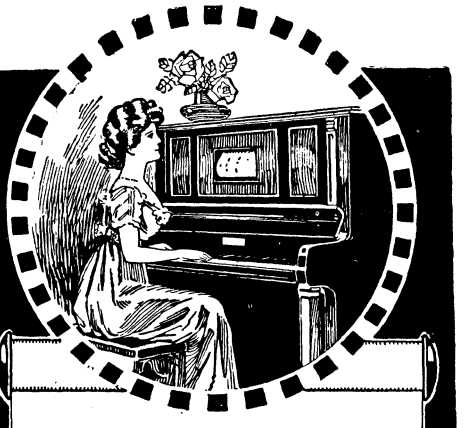
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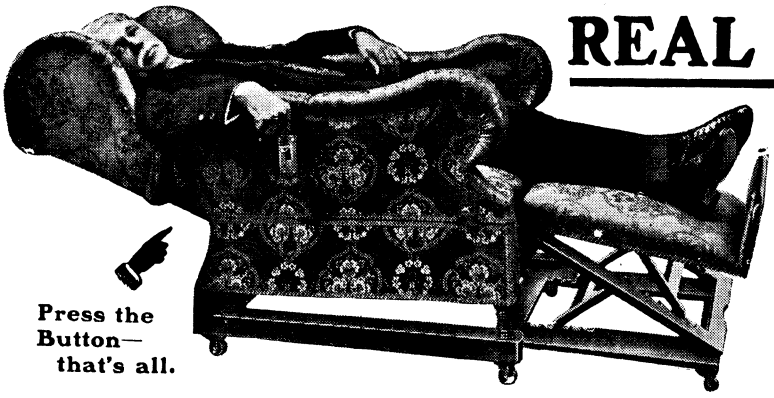
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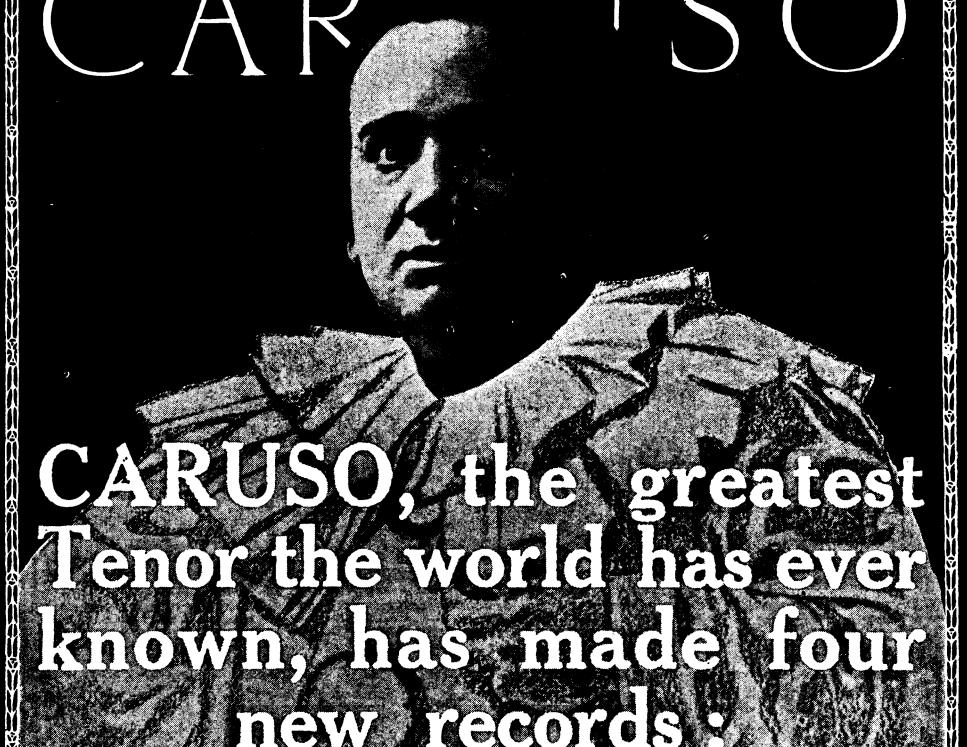
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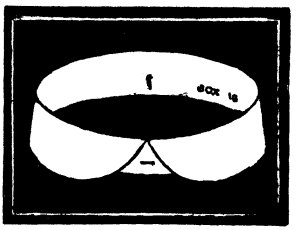
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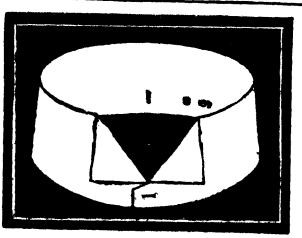
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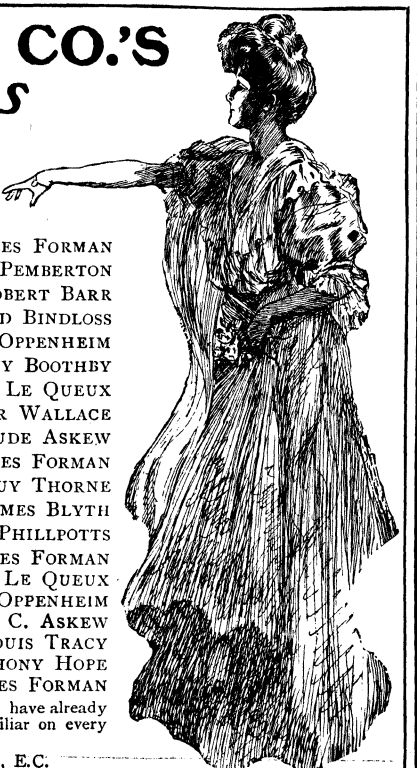
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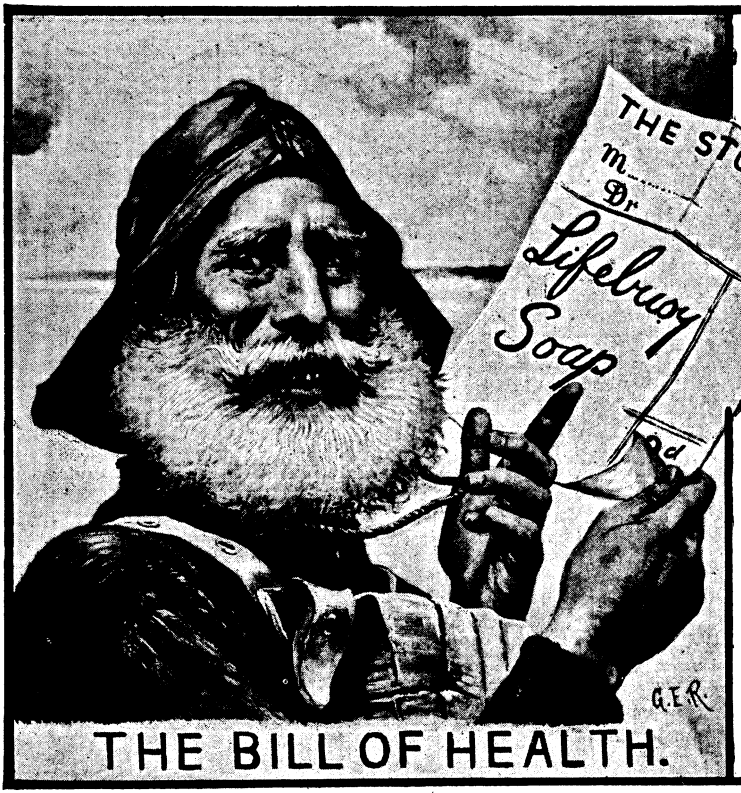
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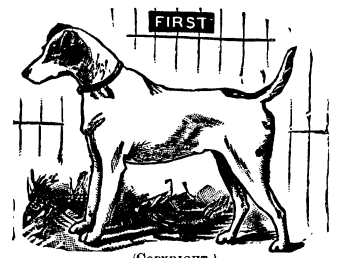
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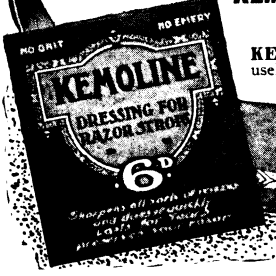
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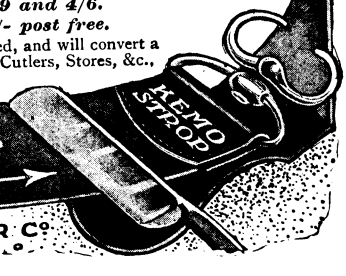
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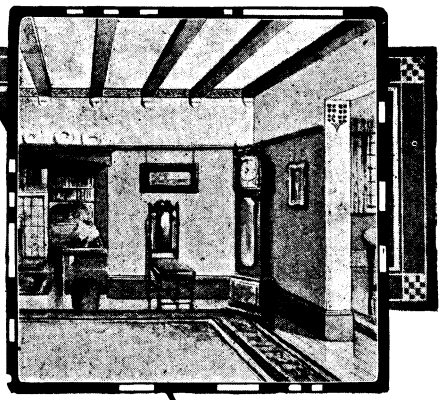
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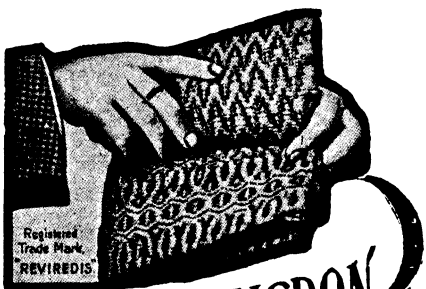
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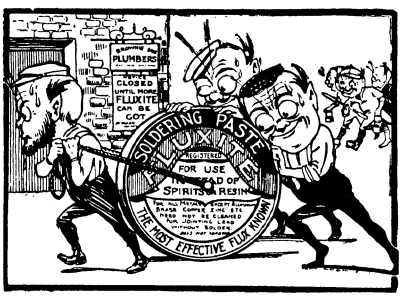
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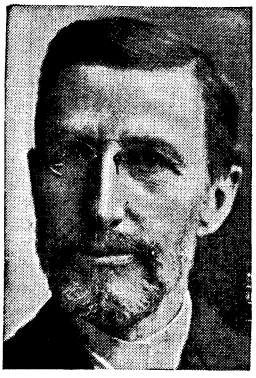
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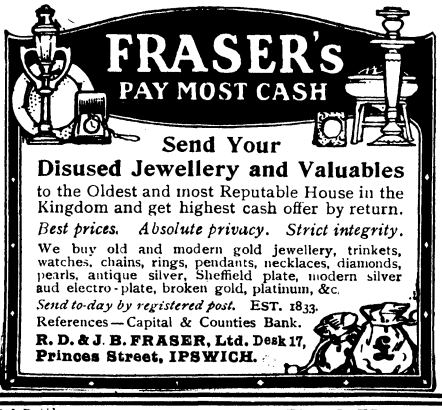
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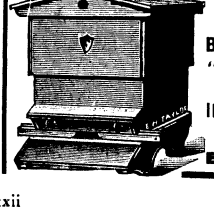


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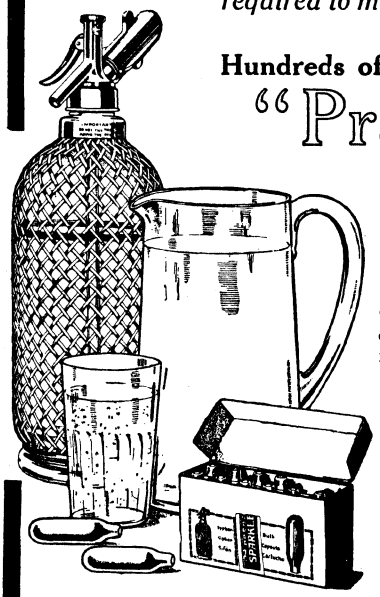
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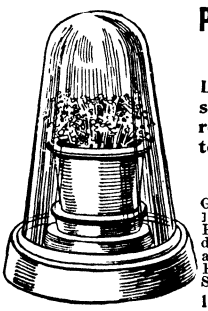
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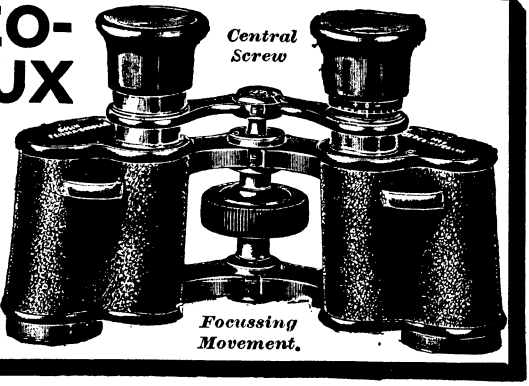
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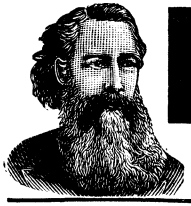
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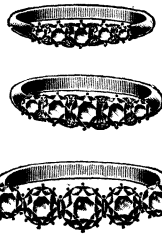
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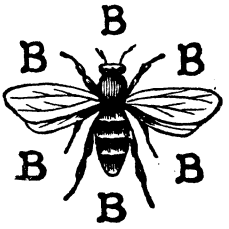
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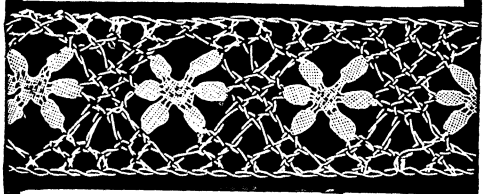
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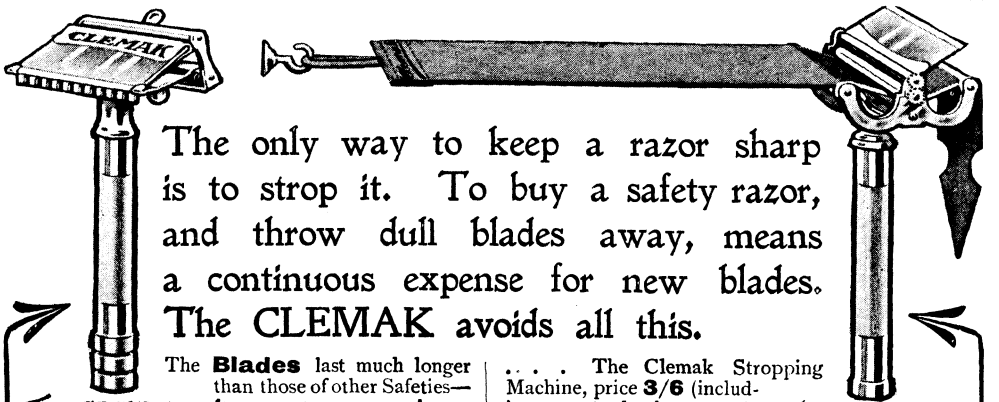
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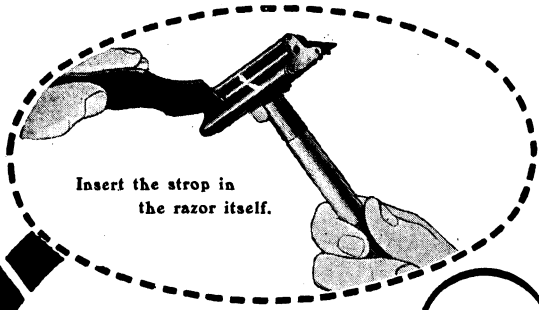
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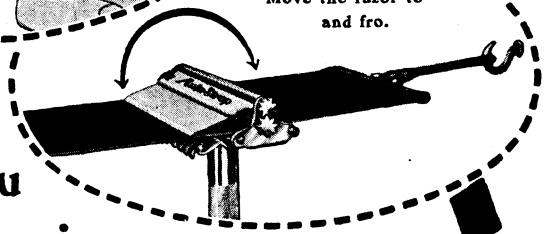
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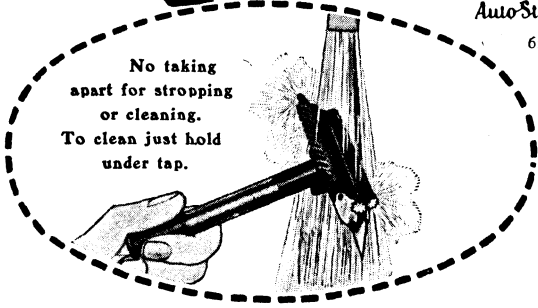
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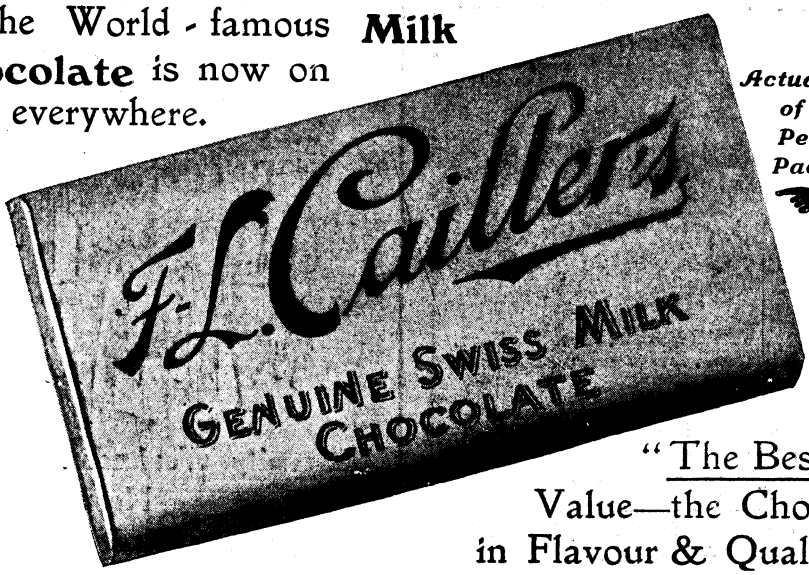
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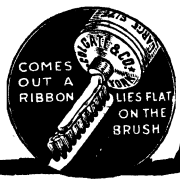
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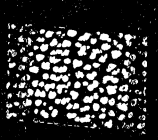
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